THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Vaiti of the Islands—By Beatrice Grimshaw

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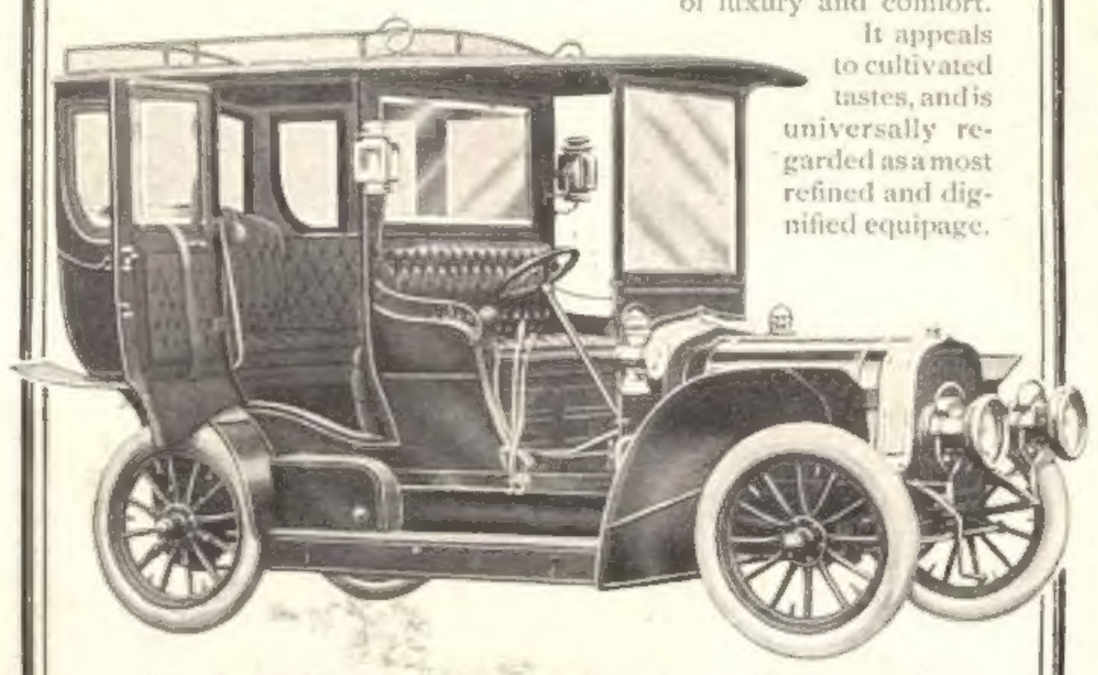

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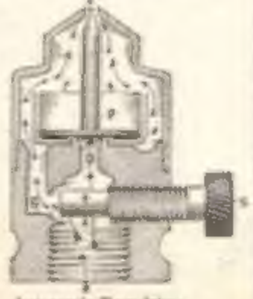

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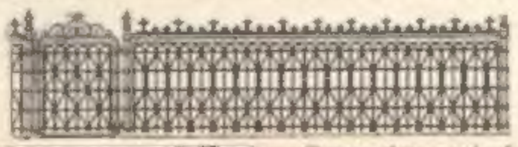

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VAITI OF THE ISLANDS

"I Find Great Lot Lying on Reef"

BY BEATRICE GRIMSHAW

The Tale of the Pearl Lagoon

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"WHERE'S the old man?"

"Old man's below," replied Vaiti indifferently. She had learned to play The Maiden's Prayer, maltreat three European languages, and cultivate a waist, in her Tahitian convent school. But that was five years ago now, and Vaiti's "papalangi" verbs had dropped from her quite as soon, and quite as naturally, as her "Belitani" stays.

"Why can't he wake up and give us an observation?" commented the mate indignantly. "It would be 'ard if a man mightn't enjoy himself in port, but we're four days out now, and he's as bad as ever, lyin' all the time on the settee like a——"

"You better mind too much what you say my father!" Vaiti had set one shapely olive hand on the deck, and sprung to her feet like a flying-fish making a leap. She was taller than the sturdy, red-haired mate as she stood up on the poop, her bare feet well apart, her white muslin loose gown swelling out as she leaned to the roll of the steamer, and her black-brown eyes, deep set under fine brows as straight as a ruler, staring down the blue eyes of the man.

"Very sorry, I'm sure; no offense meant," said the mate humbly. "But we want an observation, and he ain't no good. Why, you know as well as me that he'll be like this, off and on, all the voyage now; we've both two of us seen it before."

Vaiti stamped her bare foot on the deck.

"I know. I know! I try all the way from Apia wake him up. No good! I tell you, Alliti"—the mate's name, Harris, usually took this form in the pigeon-English of Polynesia—"this very bad time for him to get 'quiffy. Too much bad time. Never mind. Get the sextan'; I take sun myself."

The mate ran down the companion and into the cabin, where the captain's six feet two of ineptitude sprawled over most of the space available for passing. He stopped for a moment to look at the heavy, unconscious face—a handsome face, with the remains of refinement about it; for Captain Saxon had been a gentleman once, and his name had appeared among the lists of "members deceased" in the annual reports of all the best London clubs for the year 1874. Why Captain Saxon died, and why he came to life again in the South Pacific, some years later, is a tale that need not be told here. Many such substantial ghosts roam the South Seas—many a man whose name adorns a marble tablet, guarded by weeping marble angels, on the walls of some ivied English church, is busy conferring a peculiar fitness upon the occupation of those guardian seraphs, down among "The Islands," where he and the devil may do as they please.

"'Og!" observed the mate, as he passed through to the captain's cabin and fetched out the sextant. "'Alf-caste or quarter-caste, Vaiti's too good a daughter for him, by the length of the mainmast and the mizzen together! She's got all the brains. How she learned navigation from him, like a cat lapping up milk, when she set her mind to it! And none of his villainy; at least——" The mate paused on the companion and filled his pipe.

"At least——" he repeated, and broke off the remark unfinished.

"Sun coming out nice now," he said, handing the sextant to the girl. Vaiti made her observation with the ease of an old sea-captain and went below to work it out. It was true, as Harris said, that she had plenty of brains, though they did not lie along the line of The Maiden's Prayer and Doctor Smith's English Grammar. And, whatever the legal status of poor, derelict Saxon, or the mate, might be, no one who had ever climbed the side of the schooner Sybil could doubt the obvious fact that the real commanding officer of that vessel was Vaiti herself.

"What d'you make it?" asked the mate, looking over her shoulder.

Vaiti, always sparing of her words, pointed to the figures.

Harris whistled.

"Ain't we off our course, just!" he said, drawing his finger down the chart.

"No," said Vaiti.

"Why, hang it all, Cap"—the girl was accorded the title, half in fun, half through habit, a good deal oftener than her father—"we ain't making for the Delgada reefs, are we? I don't pretend to be any navigator, but I do know the course for Papeete."

"What you think not matter," said Vaiti, rolling up the chart. "Make him eight bell. You go take wheel; I ki-ki (dinner), then I take him."

"What's the course?" demanded the mate eagerly.

"Nor'west by west," answered Vaiti, going into her cabin, and slamming the door against Harris' open-mouthed questions.

An Aitutaki boy with a chain of red berries in his hair, and a scarlet and yellow kilt for all clothing, brought up the dinner. Vaiti ate her meal alone, and then came on deck to take over the wheel, keeping a determined silence that Harris hardly cared to

In a Gown Evidently Purported to be "Paris"

Editor's Note—This is the first of a series of five stories about Vaiti of the Islands, each story being complete in itself.

break. And yet—nor'west by west, with the wind fair for distant Papeete, and the deadly Delgadas lying about a quarter of a point off their present course not ten miles away!

"She's a hard case, bo'sun," he remarked to that official as they sat down together. "She has me fair scared with the course she's steering; and yet, you may sling me over the side in a shotted hammock for the sharkses' ki-ki, if she don't know a lot more than the old man himself. Ain't she a daisy, too! Look at her there 'olding the wheel, as upright as a cocoanut palm, and as pretty and plump as a—as a——"

"Porker," concluded the bo'sun, pouring an imperial pint of tea into his mug.

"You ain't got no poetry in you," said the mate disgustedly.

"Nor nothing else," growled the bo'sun. "Ain't you going to help that curry, and give a man something to put in his own inside, after stowing the whale-boat full of beef and biscuits?"

"The whale-boat? (That's plenty, bo'sun; I've got to live as well as you.)"

"Ay, biscuits, beef and water; compass and—— She give the order a while ago."

"What's in the wind now?"

"I don't ask questions, so I'm never told no lies."

"I do, though," said the mate, in a spasm of authority, deserting his dinner to spring up the companion and join Vaiti at the wheel.

The bo'sun's mahogany face broke up into a score of curving wrinkles, and his shoulders shook a little, as he watched the scene on deck. Quite mechanically he transferred the rest of the curry to his plate, and, while clearing the dish with the precision of a machine, kept an eye on the couple at the wheel.

He saw Harris ask an eager question, and repeat it more eagerly. He saw Vaiti jerk a brief answer, and the mate speak again. Then he saw the girl swing round on her heel, lift one slender hand, and bring it down across Harris' cheek with an emphasis that left a crimson mark upon the polished brown. He saw the mate take a step forward, and look at the handsome helmswoman as though he were very much minded to pay back the correction after the manner of men in general, where a pretty vixen is concerned. The two figures stared at each other, eye to eye, for a full minute. Vaiti's brown eyes, keen as twin swords, never wavered; her lip was insolent and unrelenting. The mate's half-angry, half-mischievous expression dissolved into an embarrassed grin; then he turned tail and hurried down the hatch.

"She's a tigress in 'uman form!" he declared. "If the old man—or any other—was to lay his little finger on me —— But there, who cares what a scratchin' cat does? I'd as soon marry a shark, that I would!"

"You've as much chance," grunted the bo'sun.

"Talk of sharks!" said the mate, gazing ruefully at the table and the empty dish.

Some two hours later, a milky gleam on the port bow attracted the mate's attention, as he stood on the poop. A Kanaka sailor had just taken the wheel, and Vaiti was below.

"Breakers on the port bow!" sang out Harris.

Vaiti was up in a moment.

"I t'row water on my father's head," she said coolly, "but no good; he too much sick; he see snakes by and by, I think. You and Oki carry him into the cabin, and come back pretty quick. I see this t'rough myself."

"See *what?*" demanded the mate, on the last verge of frenzy.

"Not know myself yet," answered Vaiti, giving one of her rare laughs. She seemed in a very good humor, for once.

When the mate came out a little later, and the sailor went back to the neglected wheel, Vaiti was standing by the whale-boat wearing an air of perfect self-possession and a complete suit of her father's white ducks. The sight was no novelty to Harris, but it came upon him now, as usually, with a new shock of admiration.

"Isn't she an outrighter!" he observed to the unsympathetic bo'sun.

"She certainly is, if outrighter's French for an undacent young woman," replied that officer sourly. Harris did not hear him, for the significance of the morning's mystery had just burst on his mind. He had not spent ten years in the Pacific for nothing—and the sight of Tai, a diver from Penrhyn, standing beside Vaiti, with a water-glass in his hand, spelt "pearl-shell" to the eyes of the mate, as clearly as if the magic word had been printed in letters three feet long.

Vaiti flashed her white teeth at him.

"Tai, me, three boys, we go into lagoon," she said. "Suppose somethings happen, you find course for Apia written out, cabin table; you take ship back, put captain in hospital."

"You're a corker, Vaiti!" cried Harris admiringly. "Where'd you hear anything about the Delgadas? No ship goes near them that can help it; they're a regular ocean cemetery."

With an Emphasis that Left a Crimson Mark Upon the Polished Brown

"You 'member 'Melicani officer from gunboat, Apia?"

"Ay," said Harris. He did remember the lad, and the rather inexplicable friendliness shown him by Saxon and Vaiti during the stay in port of the Hornet.

"He show me photo Delgadas. Hornet, he been go all round him; mark him right for chart; because he all wrong. 'Melicani officer give my father bearings; say plenty talk and show photo. He fool officer, I think; he not know that place mean pearl-shell; and we not tell anything."

Harris mounted the rigging and surveyed the reef from the main crosstrees. It was the best part of a mile away, a creaming circle of foam on the sea's blue surface, inclosing a pallid spot of green. Vaiti, who had followed him, flung one arm round the mast, and, leaning outward toward the horizon, surveyed the reef intently. Within that ring of foam—the grave of many a gallant ship that had sailed the fair Pacific as bravely as their own little schooner—might lie many thousands of pounds. The purchase of the Sybil, now owned by a trading syndicate; the regaining of Saxon's lost position in decent society; the realization of half a hundred luxurious dreams, dreamed on coral beaches under the romance-breeding splendors of the tropic moon—all this, and more, hung on the chances of the next few hours.

There was silence for the space of a minute or two, as the man and woman swung between earth and heaven, staring across the sun-dazzled plain of sea. Then, in one instant, the dream broke, and the rainbow fragments of that bubble of glory scattered themselves east and west. For across the bar of the level horizon slipped a small, pointed, pearl-colored sail, growing as they watched it, flying past, and heading all too surely for the Delgadas reef.

Vaiti flung herself round a backstay, and slid down to the deck, with a word on her lips that would have justified the bo'sun's recent judgment, could he have caught it. Harris followed, swearing fully and freely. It was evident to both that the newcomer had special business with the reef, as well as themselves; and they wasted no time, acting in concord, and without dispute, after a fashion that was new on board the Sybil. Within half an hour they had reduced the distance between the ship and the reef to a quarter of a mile; nearer than that even Vaiti did not care to go, for the weather looked unsettled, though the wind was off the reef. The whale-boat, with a picked crew, was lowered, and sent flying toward the break in the reef; while the mate, burning to be in her, but conscious that his duty must keep him on the ship, paced excitedly up and down the deck, glass in hand, watching the advance of the stranger ship from time to time. She was a good two hours' sail away as yet; and surely first possession was worth something, even out here in the lawless South Seas!

Before an hour was over, however, the wind had freshened considerably, and the mate began to feel anxious for the safety of the boat, in case he should be obliged to run for it, from the neighborhood of the treacherous reef. That Vaiti would return an instant sooner because of the threatening weather he did not expect, knowing the daredevil recklessness of her character too well. It was certain, however, that he might lose the ship, and incidentally himself, by waiting too long; and it was equally certain that Saxon, once recovered, would put a bullet through his head if Vaiti came to harm. And all the time that threatening sail was growing larger and larger.

It was an unspeakable relief, though no less of a surprise, when he saw that the boat was actually heading toward the ship again, the sail up, and every oar hard at work. He did not remember having seen Tai go down, in any of his hurried inspections through the glass; and the time was certainly short. What did it all mean?

The meaning became sufficiently clear as soon as the boat approached the ship; but not through the medium of eye or ear. A strong stench of rotting fish struck the mate's nostrils almost before the boat was within hail, and instantly enlightened him. No one who has ever smelt the terrible smell of the pearl-oyster removed from its ocean bed, and left to putrefy in a tropical sun, can mistake the odor. Harris understood at once that the strange ship had been there before, and that Vaiti was bringing back a sample of the last catch, left out to rot during the vessel's temporary absence.

The Sybil was leaping dangerously when the boat came alongside; but Vaiti snatched at the lowered rope and swung herself up over the bulwarks before any of the native crew. Tai, following her, brought a sack of hideously smelling carrion, and dumped it down on the deck. The mate's eyes glistened.

"I find great lot lying on reef," said Vaiti with an apparent calmness that might have deceived any one who knew her less accurately than the mate. "I think be there two week. C'lismas Island, he one week away, good weather. Papalangi C'lismas Island belong plenty diving-gear. You see?"

"Rather!" said Harris gloomily. "Game up, eh?"

"I think you no man at all!" spat out Vaiti suddenly, swinging into the cabin.

Harris, not especially put out, gave a hand to hauling in the boat; remarking to the bo'sun, who was picking over the heap of decaying pearl-shell: "Don't know as one could say the same about her, lump of solid devilment that she is! But this looks like the end of all our 'opes, as they say in the plays; don't it?"

In a minute or two Vaiti appeared again, wearing a dignified muslin gown with three frills on its tail, and holding a chart in her hands. She eyed the horizon narrowly, and ordered the ship to be put about: a manœuvre which headed the Sybil straight for the oncoming sail. It was now evident that the stranger ship was a schooner of some eighty or ninety tons, rather larger than the Sybil and quite as fast. No one on board had the smallest doubt of her mission, even had that rotting heap of shell not been there to offer evidence. Pearl-shell lagoons—with their shell worth from £100 to £2000 per ton, and their pearls (if any are found, which is not always certain) worth a fortune on half a handful—are the gold-mines of the South Sea world; the very birds of the sea seem at times to carry the news of such a discovery, and spread it far and wide.

The Sybil gathered way, and sped fast toward the stranger ship. The sea was blackening and rising, but there was not very much wind as yet. Vaiti sat cross-legged on the deck, studying her chart in the waning light of the gusty afternoon. It was some minutes before she laid it down and stood up to speak, steadying herself with one hand against the deck-house, for the schooner was now rolling heavily.

"Alliti!" she said. "Suppose you got heart one small fowl inside you, I get Captain's Winchester, my levolver, you and bo'sun's levolver, and we send that people Davy Jones, or go ourselves, pretty quick. But you not got heart, though you big man—and old man, he all time sick. Now you listen too much what I tell you. We run alongside ship, you go on board. You say captain sick, no one take sun, we get off course, nearly wreck on Delgadas. Then you ask captain give bearings reef, and you look at him chart too much careful, see if this line mark—here."

She put the point of her small forefinger on the chart she held, and showed two or three newly-ruled lines in red ink, inclosing a large area east and south of Samoa.

"Then you ask if captain come from New Zealand, and you say me going Auckland, and our old man, he hear house belong him burn down in big fire in Wellington, and he want to know that true? Now you say all over to me."

"What for?" demanded the mate.

"Because I say, pig!" flashed Vaiti. "No!—you got head of pig, heart of fowl. You, bo'sun, you know I get you t'rough this all right, suppose you trusting me—you come here."

Harris, shaking his great shoulders in an easy laugh, swung down on to the main deck, and began ordering about the crew. He had an enormous admiration for Vaiti, even when she boxed his ears, but he thought her special peculiarities of character rather a trying obstacle in the way of his enjoying the easy life beloved of South Sea mates.

The acidulous bo'sun rose from his seat on deck, holding out an extremely unclean palm, in the midst of which glittered two fine pearls.

"I've been through that little lot, and got these, which do look like biz, ma'am," he observed. "As to people havin' fowls' hearts or pigs' heads, I'm not prepared to pass judgment. But I don't own to neither myself, and if you say it's a fight, a fight it is. Or if you've got a better plan in that uncommon level 'ead of yours, I'm ready to stand by."

"You something like a man," pronounced the commanding officer in the muslin skirt. "You listen, I tell him all again."

An hour later the bo'sun, very wet and draggled, climbed over the bulwarks of the Sybil; and the schooner Margaret Macintyre, of Sydney, slipped behind into the falling dusk.

"Said he was thirteen weeks out from Sydney, ma'am," reported the ambassador; "four weeks out from Apia, gettin' copra round here and there, and there wasn't no news of a fire by the last mail, as he remembered. Nice new chart, with no lines of that kind ruled on it anywhere. As to where he got the divin'-gear that was in the cabin, or what kind of copra he reckoned to pick up on the Delgadas, he didn't say, not bein' asked."

Vaiti stood still to consider, a beautifully poised black silhouette against the yellow oblong of the lamp-lit cabin door.

"I think it all right; he not been near Wellington," she pronounced at last. "Alliti! How her head?"

"Sou'west by south," answered the mate from the wheel.

"Keep her so."

"Aye, aye, sir!" laughed the mate.

. . . . . .

Every one in the South Pacific knew that the Sybil was one of the fastest little schooners ever turned out of 'Frisco, where they know how to build a clipper; but the record of her passage from the Delgadas to Wellington, New Zealand, fairly astonished the Islands, when it came to be told. The wind was fair almost all the way, with two or three lively nights when the little vessel, driven hard under the utmost possible pressure of canvas, piled up the knots like a liner. Saxon continued delirious, but was fortunately quiet. Harris, and Gray, the bo'sun, although unenlightened as to the cause of the Sybil's sudden southward flight, fully understood that the possession of the pearl lagoon hung in the balance, and worked like four men to supplement the efforts of the scanty Kanaka crew. Vaiti interfered little with the working of the ship, but she kept a lookout that hardly left her time for sleep or food; although the Sybil, like most Pacific ships, was allowed, under ordinary circumstances, to chance it, day and night. Hour after hour she sat cross-legged on deck, watching the unbroken rim of the black horizon—or paced up and down the poop, silent and grave, in her lace and muslin fripperies, as a naval officer on the bridge. What she was looking for no one knew; but during that wild ten days of foam and smother, cracking sails and straining sheets, her silent watchfulness infected the men themselves, and eyes were constantly turned to scan the empty, seething plain over which they flew.

It was drawing on toward dusk of the tenth day, and the sky was beginning to light fires of angry copper-purple high in the storm-driven west, when Vaiti, of a sudden, stopped dead in her endless walk, and looked with lips apart, and eyes narrowed deep beneath her brows, over the weather rail. All this time they had not sighted a single sail or a solitary funnel. They had been well off the track of New Zealand bound ships, and the Pacific waters are wide. But now they were drawing near to Wellington, and there was nothing to be astonished at in the sight of another sail, creeping up over the horizon—except, indeed, the fact that it was momentarily growing larger, and gaining on the Sybil. There were not many schooners afloat, from New Guinea to the Paumotus, that could have done as much.

The mate came up behind Vaiti and handed her a glass She looked through it, lowered it, raised it, and looked again with a steady gaze, and suddenly flung it out of her hand across the deck.

Harris caught it deftly, and asked, with the constitutional calm that alone saved his reason when Vaiti took over command:

"What's to pay now?"

"She got auxiliary," said Vaiti, with a note of agony in her voice.

"What if she has? Isn't any vessel free to carry an auxiliary that can stand the stink of the oil and the cussedness of the ingin'?"

"I go see captain," said Vaiti, flashing down the companion.

Saxon was better to-day, and almost in full possession of his senses. Vaiti went to the medicine-chest, took out a hypodermic syringe, filled it with careful accuracy from a tiny dark-blue bottle, and lifted her father's arm, as he lay limp and weak, but mending fast, in his bunk.

"Good girl, take care of your old father," he murmured in Maori, as she slipped the needle-point painlessly under the skin, and the powerful drug began to race through every vein of the inert body. The effect was rapid and decisive. Saxon sat up against his pillows in five minutes, clear-headed though weak, and asked if the Sybil had not sighted the Delgadas yet.

"Listen, father," said Vaiti, speaking fluently in the low, soft tongue that the two had used together all her life—the Maori language Saxon had first learned from the pretty brown girl he had stolen from her New Zealand "pah," to sail the blue Pacific at his side, in the days of long ago—"Listen. There is little time, and we are in great need. We came to the reef, and the shell was there truly, but a strange ship had been before us. Even as we lay there, she returned from Christmas Island with diving-gear. I sent Gray on board to look at her chart, and find out by a trick if she had been to Wellington; and it seemed that she had not the new line of annexation marked on the chart,

Within that Ring of Foam—the Grave of Many a Gallant Ship—Might Lie Many Thousands of Pounds

where New Zealand this year added to herself all that lay within a certain space of the sea; also she had not been south of Auckland. So then, knowing that we, if we asked the Government, might have the atoll granted us for twenty years, and take possession above the people of the other ship, I made sail for Wellington; and we are now but one day away, when this ship appears again, chasing us. Where the suspicion has waked in their hearts, or when, is nothing; they have discovered our desire."

"Give the Sybil all sail, daughter, and she will leave the other—what is this talk?" asked Saxon, raising himself on his elbow to look out of the glooming circle of the port.

"But the ship has 'auxiliary,' my father, and she will have passed out of sight before the morning."

"Oh, she has, has she?" grunted the captain, dropping back into his native tongue. "What are you going to do about it?"

He had noted a glimmer in Vaiti's eye that told him she was not yet at the end of her resources. The Maori guile and the English daring were united to some purpose in this strange creature that he had given to the world.

"I will tell," she said, standing up to her full height; "but you must give the order, my father, for Alliti drags on the rein, these days. Let the bale of trawl-net and the manila rope be taken from the cargo, and let us cross the bows of this ship, and drop them across her path. The keel will run clean, but the screw will foul, and they will creep like a bird with a broken wing till daylight. Then, if the sea has grown less, they will send down a diver, and clear the screw; but we shall be almost into Wellington, and the lagoon is ours."

"You are worthy to be the daughter of a brave man," answered Saxon in Maori, sinking back wearily on his pillow. "Go, then, and if we lose the ship, we lose her; there is great wealth to gain, and a man must die at one time, if not another. I am tired; I will sleep."

Vaiti left him and hurried back on deck. The purple dusk was already beginning to gather, and the green starboard light of the Margaret Macintyre gleamed like a glowworm a mile or so behind. She was drawing very near; there was no time to lose.

"Alliti!" called Vaiti. "My father, he better; he send word to take trawl-net and manila out of hold, make come across that ship him path, foul him screw. Suppose you not afraid, you bring us close, drop net and manila."

Harris' hide was thick, but Vaiti knew how to pierce it when she chose; and the man had courage enough, in streaks. Vaiti had hit the mark when she called him chicken-hearted in fighting! but there was no manœuvre of the ship too risky for him to undertake and carry through with perfect coolness.

"All right, my lady," he nodded. "Don't forget me and Gray when it comes to sharin' out the swag, that's all."

The net and the rope were brought up, and the latter knotted here and there to make a hideous tangle of it. Then the Sybil's lights were put out, even the cabin lamp being extinguished. The stars pricked themselves out in sudden sharpness on the great blue chart of heaven above, and the waste of dark, rolling water all around grew large and lonely.

You are not to suppose that Norman Saxon's daughter did not see and feel these things—did not hear the voiceless talk of the great seas on starry evenings, or feel her mortal body almost rapt away in the ecstasy of a black midnight and a shrieking storm; just as you, perhaps, who think that no one ever shared such experiences with yourself, may feel. It is not only the blameless tourist, with his daily diary, and his books of travel, teaching him how and when to "enthuse," who enjoys the splendid pageant of the seas. Vaiti, as the most indulgent chronicler must confess, had more than a spice of her father's villainy in her composition, not to speak of whatever devilry her Maori forebears might have bequeathed to her. She was unscrupulous, ruthless and crafty as a general rule; she was engaged in a deed of the very shadiest description to-night—yet, as she stood with her hands on the wheel, and her eyes on the green starboard light of the oncoming ship, steering the Sybil to something extremely like certain destruction, she knew that the Southern Cross was rising, clear and beautiful, above its gemlike pointers, just ahead; and that a little sliver of young moon, crystal-silver against the dark, was slipping up the sky to her left. The thought just grazed her mind that this might be the last time the moon would ever rise over the Pacific for her. She smiled a little in the dusk, and steered steadily ahead. There were no "streaks" in the composition of Vaiti's spirit.

A short tack to starboard became necessary. Harris put the ship about at a lift of Vaiti's hand. It grew very dark; a cloud was over the moon, and the stars were dimmed by driving vapors. The wind was increasing; the schooner lay over with its weight, and the foam gurgled along her clean-run sides. Still the Margaret Macintyre came on, stately and unsuspicious, all sail set, and the beat of the little screw distinctly audible through the night.

Vaiti signaled again to put the ship about, and as soon as the great boom had creaked across the deck, gave over the wheel to Harris.

"Run him just as he head now," she said softly; "and bring him too much close to ship, he scrape the paint off him. I go do rest."

Harris, humming "Good-by, Dolly Gray," took the wheel over. If he had any doubts as to Vaiti's purpose,

(Concluded on Page 39)

WHO'S WHO—AND WHY

Governor by Schedule

GOVERNORS of New York are inclined to puff out their chests and say their office is next in importance to President. It is a sizable office, bigger than many of the men who have held it, by the same signal-smoke.

There are about eight million people in New York. Half of them know the Governor's name. There are about seventy-six million people in the United States outside of New York, although your real New Yorker will not admit it, and those who know the name of New York's Governor come under the scattering column. It is the same with every other Governor of every other State. He is a great man in the State capital, and in his home town, while he lasts, but elsewhere he is something necessary under our system of government. Occasionally a Governor does something that gives him a brief celebrity, but mostly they toil over dull routine through their terms and, after they have retired, go home, rub their foreheads and wonder dully what it was all about.

That is what Frank Wayland Higgins, the present Governor of New York, will do. When he gets back to Olean, which will be about next January, unless things change some, he will be due for a period of retrospection and introspection that will culminate in the question for which there is no answer: What's the use? And that does not mean he has not been a good-enough Governor as Governors go, but that he is accumulating the penalty that goes with the job.

Every community has a leading citizen in whom is focused the respectability, the dignity, the uplift—as the women's clubs put it—of the place. Some of these leading citizens remain leading citizens until they die, shedding their radiance only on the home town. Others get out into the broader glare of public affairs, but only for the reason that caused their rise to eminence among their own people.

Higgins was, and is, the leading citizen of Olean. He is a wholesale grocer: a most respectable business. Olean was proud of him when he merely led in the uplift movements at home. Olean was proud of him when he concluded to go to the State Senate, and Olean is hysterically proud of him now, when he has attained the governorship. Olean is a thrifty little town in Southwestern New York, not so named because it is the home of oleanders, but because it is a tank-station for the Standard Oil Company, developed after the oil-strikes in the contiguous Pennsylvania territory and needing an oleaginous name. They couldn't call it Oil City, because there was already an Oil City, so some genius picked out Olean, which is appropriate, distinctive and descriptive.

To be the leading citizen of Olean, or any other place, requires certain attributes that are available to almost anybody who will set out in earnest to attain them. The first is a high hat. That must be worn to church every Sunday morning, in conjunction with what is known in leading-citizen sections as a Prince Albert coat. The second is an impressive handshake, that confers distinction on the shakee. The third is a calm, dignified, judicial demeanor. The fourth is the ability, or the disability, rather, to think exactly in common with all other sub-leading citizens and with the sub-sub-leading citizens. The leading citizen must be grave, ponderous, conventional. In short, he must always live up to his high hat and his Prince Albert coat.

Now, there is a route that will bring success to any man, if he is narrow enough to travel it without bumping against the sides. He must identify himself with every "movement." He must be colorless, for if he isn't he will make enemies.

Pretty soon his admiring townspeople will make him village trustee and he will attain eminence in other ways. Then they will send him to the legislature. After that he need only preserve his conventional equilibrium and the paths to glory are open, for political bosses need respectability. They nominate men for office, not because of the men themselves, but because they know the masses who are to do the voting. Your average voter is a great humbug. No matter what he may be himself, he will not vote for any person who does not live up to his high hat and his Prince Albert coat.

It came out according to schedule with Higgins. He served in the State Senate and became Lieutenant-Governor. Then came a campaign where help was needed. It would not do to nominate a man who was not impeccable, and they nominated Higgins. The high hat and the Prince Albert coat had won, and New York has a Governor who is as conventional as a pound of rolled oats.

The Governor is a small, pursy man, with a placid face on which there is no distinguishing feature. He radiates dignity. He looks as if he was about to hold up an impressive hand and say: "Now, children, I feel constrained to remark that, if you would succeed in life, you must do unto others as they would do unto you. Be virtuous and you will be happy. Honesty is the best policy."

Governor Frank W. Higgins, of New York

After he became Governor he decided that it would never do for him, a leading citizen, to be reproached with the term "partisan." He admitted, of course, that he is a party man, but he evolved the idea that the men who put him in his place are not so good as they might be, and he developed the remarkable brand of independence that has puzzled everybody who has watched him. It wasn't real independence. It was independence in spots, trotted out only at times when Higgins thought he might make something for himself through it. Far be it from him, a leading citizen, to be swayed by any but those motives that make for the good of all the people all the time. He was elected by all the people—on his side—except a hundred thousand or so who voted for President Roosevelt and would not vote for him, and he must take up that trust as a sacred one.

From time to time he lighted signal-fires on Capitol Hill at Albany and called the attention of the public to his independence. He never lighted a fire when there was any danger that he would get scorched by it himself. Once in a while, when he had President Roosevelt behind him, for instance, or when the person he could squash was of small importance, he assumed a heroic pose and beat his breast and called on all bosses to leave his sight forever. It didn't hurt him any, and there was a chance that he might impress somebody.

Constitutionally, Higgins can no more be independent than he could wear a pink shirt. He isn't that kind. All his life he has succeeded by falling in behind and edging his way up to the front rank. He figured that his ever-present aid in time of stress would be President Roosevelt. He knew the President's frame of mind. He asserted himself when he thought the President was looking, or when the President asked him to, and all the rest of the time he was the same leading-citizen Higgins, wedded to precedent, convention and the greatest good for the Higgins family.

The Governor is torn constantly with conflicting impulses and fears. He wants so much to be a strong, noble figure, standing there in Albany, ruling for the people and without regard to the exigencies of politics, and he is mortally afraid that, if he does, he will get the worst of it. He vetoed a bill last winter that most of the big men, leaders of his party and men who had put him where he is, wanted him to sign. He vetoed it for the specific reason that he wanted to show that he was not a Governor who would ever evade any right by a hair's-breadth, no matter if every voter in the State asked him to. He chose this bill as the crowning act of his series of independence evolutions. It was to be brave, to be defiant of the bosses, to show the leaders that he could not be influenced. Besides, the bill was a personal one, and, as it affected but an individual, Higgins didn't see where he could lose many votes.

It was a master-stroke; but it so happened that the newspapers knew the very reason Higgins let the bill die was this reason: that he wanted to make a grand-stand play on it; and not one of them referred to it. It was a sad, sad day for Higgins. He foozled his master-stroke. Still, it had its value, for it showed the kind of independence the Higgins brand is.

He is making another similar attempt just now. Naturally, he is anxious for a renomination. That does not seem likely, in the present state of affairs, and the only way Higgins can see to gain it is to get the support of the President. All his efforts are devoted to proving, with an eye single on Oyster Bay, that he is not bound by any pledges to leaders, that he is his own Governor. His independence is the made-to-suffice kind.

Still, these are personal peculiarities, developed by personal ambitions and fostered by congenital characteristics. No person can say anything against Higgins as a man. He is clean, honest, decent and of exemplary habits. Look him over from head to foot and he must be stamped O. K. He is affable, considerate, kind-hearted, and has made a fortune for himself of several millions, which is not so small a trick as it seems to be. The burr under the saddle is the miserable, in-and-out sort of politics he plays.

He had a chance to be really independent. He was Governor and he could do as he pleased. Instead, he became rigidly the Governor when his own fortunes would not be hurt and subserviently the Governor when he saw a possible impairment of his future. The result is that, whenever he tries to make a record as an independent, greatest-good-to-all-the-people Governor, the people say: "Oh, fudge!" For they know the independence has not the hallmark on it.

Stories of Stuyvesant Fish

"THE trouble is that your goods won't wear out fast enough," said Stuyvesant Fish to a friend who complained of not growing rich. "Yes, I understand," he continued, smilingly interrupting a protest; "you don't want to make anything unless you make it well. But instead of making things of iron why not make soap?" And the man did, and made a fortune.

It is by such flashes of half-humorous insight that the real Stuyvesant Fish is seen; a man still in the prime of life, of physical and financial weight, several inches over six feet in height, ordinarily slow in his motions, ordinarily of few words and those of simple directness.

Until the recent cataclysmic insurance revelations he was practically unknown. Then suddenly he came into wide prominence as standing for honesty and full investigation, and as the man to whom, more than any other, the stockholders of one of the great insurance companies looked for the safeguarding of their interests.

He has no pride in offhand inspiration. He loves to revolve a difficult proposition deliberately and to take it with him up to his "farm" and keep it over Sunday—his farm being a great estate opposite West Point which his father purchased on the very day on which Fort Sumter was fired upon.

There is much to connect this man with prominent Americanism. He is directly descended from Colonel Nicholas Fish, the friend of Washington, and another ancestor was the great Dutch-American, Peter Stuyvesant, and his father was Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State under Grant.

His stand for honesty raised up powerful enemies, bent upon his irretrievable and discrediting defeat. They endeavored to minimize his insurance influence. They tried to destroy him with the Illinois Central Railroad, of which for twenty years he has been president. It was first privately represented to him that if he would go out quietly he might put his own figure on his holdings, but he replied with that calm which is sometimes mistaken for heaviness, that he was not in the habit of considering his own interests apart from those of the stockholders, and that, in short, so long as the stockholders wanted him to, he guessed he would stay. And he did.

It is amusing to contrast the absence of public prominence as regards himself with the prominence which for years has been accorded to his wife, the leader of the "400." While Mrs. Fish has been making social history with her illimitably varied entertainments, her "peasant dances," her fêtes "à la Trianon," her dinners, Mr. Fish has gone on his unnoticed way, working as hard as if he really had to in his big many-windowed office, on the top floor of a Bowling Green skyscraper, with its splendid view of miles of water and land.

When Mrs. Fish planned a Colonial dance, and the society columns frantically announced that every man guest must be clean shaven, and gave fanciful pictures of this or that social light before and after shaving, it did not occur to the society reporters that there was a certain big giant, with a reddish mustache, who would have a good deal to say about such a matter.

Mr. Fish feels a personal love for his railroad, for he entered its service as a junior clerk immediately upon his graduation from Columbia. Under his presidency its

SERIOUS AND FRIVOLOUS FACTS
ABOUT THE GREAT AND THE NEAR GREAT

mileage and its dividends and its capital stock have more than doubled. It was through his direct inception that an advanced type of car was built for suburban traffic, with doors opposite every seat. He has inaugurated a pension system for old and disabled workers, based upon the number of years they have been employed by the railroad. Some years ago he also introduced a system by which employees might purchase stock, and thus become personally interested in the prosperity of the company. As to the growth of the capital stock of the company, he points out that at least par value has been received for every new share issued, that there has been no expense whatever for underwriting, and that thus it is evident "that the shares are held for honest investment and that the stockholders have abiding faith." In everything, he believes in a stock company for the benefit of the stockholders, and it is this that has made him a tower of strength not only in railroad matters but in insurance.

He feels a keen interest in the development of that part of the South tapped by his railroad, and stands urgently for the making of good highways and the development of good farming. He owns two model plantations in Mississippi—although he personally disclaims the designation "model"—and on the subject of roads he says: "A good wagon road is worth more to a community than a poor railroad."

He is a live railroad president, and spends much of his time in Chicago. When he became president of the Illinois Central, the population of cities of over ten thousand inhabitants reached by his railroad was only between eight and nine hundred thousand. Now, twenty years later, it is almost four million.

He is a man of many sides. He enjoys the management of great capital, but he does not love Wall Street. Its frequently undigested securities provokes him to say that "Wall Street needs to have its appendix cut out." In the way of recreation he best loves his farm: his chickens, his cows, his dogs, his vegetables. But he also has a splendid town house in New York, in the Italian style, filled with paintings and statuary, rich in marble and gilt, and with a great hall patterned after the hall of the Doges; and he has a mansion, built magnificently in Colonial style, at Newport. Nor can it be said that such things are entirely the idea of his wife. In such matters husband and wife must be in accord, especially when the husband is a forceful and original man.

He belongs to many clubs, but is seldom seen at them. "When did you bring me a letter last?" he asked of one of the old attendants at the Union Club.

"I think it was eighteen months ago, sir."

"Are you sure it wasn't my brother?"

His youth still clings to him. A long telescope is mounted at one of his office windows. "Just for amusement?" And, with a smile of humorous deprecation, "Yes." The smile broadens. "I went off in a yacht, down there, the other day, and I said to my friends that we'd have to be careful because every one of the boys in the office would take turns watching me through that glass."

That he is a college man in business is evidenced in a certain formality of quotation when he makes an address, for his speech is likely to be full of direct references to Herbert Spencer, to Emerson and John Stuart Mill.

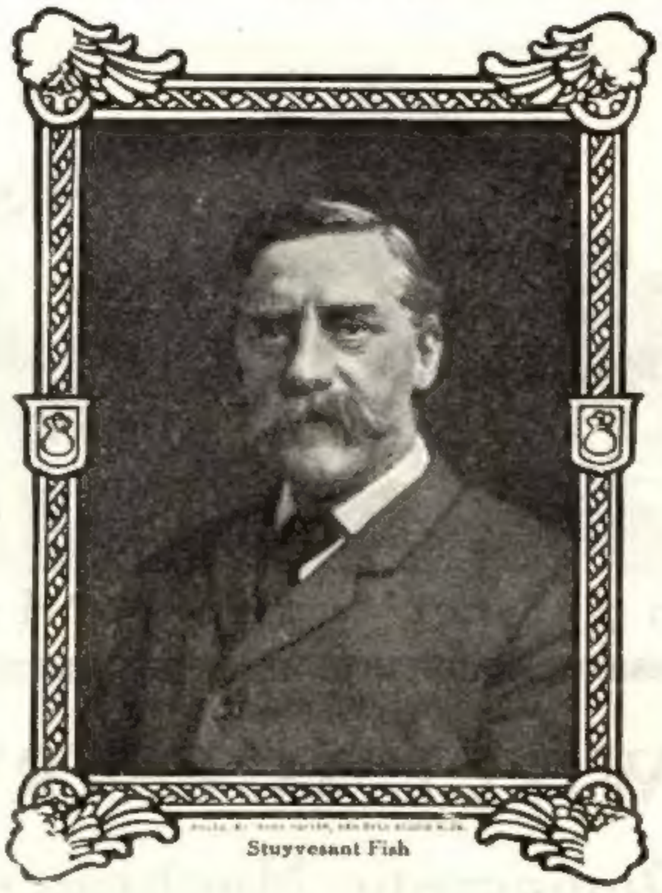
He thinks in statistics. When he deplores the present-day wastefulness he says: "If each one of our eighty-five millions saves or wastes but five cents a day it makes an annual loss or saving of $1,551,250,000."

He declares that "the evil with corporations lies in too few men having undertaken to manage too many corporations," and to point this generalization he adds that one man is a director upon 73 boards, another upon 58; that "92 New York men hold directorships in 1439 well-known corporations."

His many generations of American blood do not make him feel dread of the hosts of foreigners now flocking here. "Our only danger is from their remaining in the cities. Get them back to the land and we'll assimilate them." And he adds that he thinks it probable that the influx of immigrants is no greater now, in proportion to our entire population, than it was some years ago, before the outcry against immigration began.

Born to a wealth of millions, to which he has greatly added, he has no fear of danger from the growth of individual fortunes or great corporations. "Let great financial power be lawful and regulated and it will be safe," is his firm belief. "Americans should be the last people to object to amalgamation. Our forty-seven States are the strongest argument for *E pluribus Unum*."

Recently he found himself appointed executor of a small estate. It was the case of a family, living near his Hudson River home, who had naïvely trusted him to help them. He assumed the responsibility, straightened out tangled affairs, advertised an auction of household and farm articles, and on the day of the sale was there in person.



Stuyvesant Fish

The clump of gathered farmers, astonished, watched him as he mounted a wagon and began the sale as auctioneer. He worked with enthusiasm, and secured undreamt of prices. Then, when it was all over, "There was not enough money in it to justify hiring an auctioneer," said this man of many millions simply.

The Hall of Fame

¶ Senator Burrows, of Michigan, Fletcherizes. He says he intends to live forever.

¶ Viscount Aoki, the new Japanese Ambassador to this country, has a German wife. The Viscountess is already very popular in Washington.

¶ Norman E. Mack, the newspaper proprietor of Buffalo and a big Democratic politician, began his career as a newsboy on the Grand Trunk Railroad.

¶ Senator J. Frank Allee, of Delaware, is the only jeweler in the Senate. He has a little store in Dover and attends to it when he is not busy at statesmanship.

¶ Representative Broussard, of Louisiana, speaks French fluently. The Democrats use him on the stump in the districts where there are many French Canadians.

¶ Major-General F. C. Ainsworth, military secretary, began his army life as a doctor. If he is lucky he will get to command the army, and will be followed by General Leonard Wood, who also began as a doctor.

¶ Nehemiah Day Sperry, the Representative from Connecticut, who makes it his special business to campaign constantly against the demon Rum, is a shaggy man. "He looks like a keg of nails," said another Connecticut man.

¶ General Fred Grant wears whiskers like those of his father, General U. S. Grant. As yet, General Grant's son, who is also in the Army, shows no signs of following the hirsute traditions of the family, much to the sorrow of General Grant.

¶ Harry B. Smith, the librettist, has the "little-red-notebook" habit down finer than any of his colleagues. Smith always has the book in his pocket and jots down in it every funny thing he thinks of or hears—and they all come out in the wash of comic operas.

¶ Senator Perkins, of California, used to be a sailor-man. He went to sea from Kennebunkport, Maine, as a cabin-boy when he was thirteen years old, sailed before the mast to all parts of the world, and, when he landed in California, in 1855, he came as an A. B. on the sailing ship Galatea, from New Orleans.

¶ D. K. Watson, of Ohio, Chairman of the Commission to Revise the Laws, maintains he is the author of the gold plank in the Republican national platform of 1896. Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, and Senator Platt, of New York, also claim to be authors of the plank. Ex-Senator Chandler has investigated and says the glory belongs to Lodge.

A Disciplinary Vote

JOHN I. FAY, a well-known lawyer of Ohio, claims to be the only man in the United States who was unanimously indorsed for an office by all parties and defeated.

Fay lived in a suburb of Columbus and was nominated for mayor. He was indorsed by both parties. It fell out that he had business in Cincinnati on election day, and he went there without stopping to vote.

The farmers began to come in. They all asked for Fay. No one knew where he was. "This is a fine mess," said one of them. "Here we are voting for a man who hasn't enough interest in the job to be on hand."

"Let's put up a man of our own," said another.

They held a convention, nominated another man and voted for him, too. Fay came back about five o'clock. He voted for himself and complacently waited for the votes to be counted. When they were counted it was discovered that Fay was beaten by eight votes.

When Speech was Golden

THE late David Simpson, who, for the greater part of his life, occupied a position of responsibility and trust with the firm of Armour & Co., owed his good fortune to the fact that in his boyhood he possessed the full allowance of aplomb and independence supposed to be the birthright of young America.

One morning Mr. P. D. Armour, seated at his desk, received, at the hands of a messenger-boy, a telegram of unusual importance, and, after reading it over the second time, sat with knitted brows, absorbed in thought and oblivious of the waiting Mercury. The silence finally was broken by an imperious young voice which said:

"Come, sign this book! *My* time is money."

Turning, the millionaire saw at his elbow a small, rosy-cheeked boy who held out the book, pointing with insistent finger to the spot waiting for the recipient's name.

"Well," said Mr. Armour, looking him over approvingly, "I shouldn't wonder if we could use a boy of your stamp. What wages are you getting now?"

"Twenty-three dollars a month," was the reply.

"I will give you twenty-five."

"Done!" said the small boy promptly, and the next morning he reported bright and early, and began his daily round of duties.

However, the exuberant spirits of youth dominated him at times, and, having one day overstepped the bounds of prudence, he was discharged. Meekly the lad took his leave, but the next morning he was back again as usual.

"Hello!" said the head of the firm as he passed the department in which "Dave" was at work. "I thought you had been dismissed."

"And so I was, Mr. Armour," was the reply, "but I have thought it all over and I find that I cannot leave you for two reasons."

"And what are your reasons?"

"One is that I can't afford to give up so good a boss as you are, and the second that you can't afford to lose so good a boy as I am."

His employer laughed and passed on—and "Dave" was a fixture for life.

A Veiled Warning

JOHN H. TENNANT, a well-known New York editor, and Robert Edgren, the athlete, were sailing a small boat up Long Island Sound early one morning.

They came to City Island. There is a channel on one side where small boats may go in safety, provided they take absolute bearings on a certain red buoy that marks a dangerous shoal. This channel saves an hour of sailing around the other way.

It was foggy, but Edgren, who was at the tiller, thought he could make the short channel. He sent Tennant up to the bow to look for the red buoy, and they squared away. Tennant strained his eyes, peering into the fog. He could not pick up the buoy. They heard the water rushing over the shoals and knew that if they didn't soon get a correct bearing they would go aground.

After a short time, while Edgren howled at Tennant for his bearings, Tennant saw, through the fog, a black object that looked like a boat.

"Ahoy, there!" he shouted. "Where is that red buoy?"

"We're tied to it, fishin'," came back a hoarse reply.

"Hurry!" screamed Edgren. "Get that buoy or we're gone!"

"The buoy!" shouted Tennant into the fog. "Where in thunder is that red buoy? I can't see it."

"Probably not," came back the calm reply. "You see, I've hung my coat on it."

The Shame of the Colleges

The Burning of the Midnight Oil

II

By WALLACE IRWIN

The Democratic Machine at Yale

Dux et Demitasse—John Kendrick Bangs

IN THE first of my Shame articles I had the pleasant task of telling the terrible truth about Harvard, where the Gentleman Trust is holding a corner in the early spring crop of learning and sacred traditions. This present exposure leads us from the sacred to the profane. I intend to reveal a situation particularly distressing at New Haven, where the University Corporation of Yale (a corporation, mind you!) is conducting, within easy smell of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, the most active, the most flagrant Democratic Machine that ever fed upon the fairest youth of our land. For leagues around New Haven you can hear the cogs and wheels of that great factory pounding away, day and night, to the tune of a ceaseless rah-rah-rah, chucking raw Freshmen through the boiling vats, sliding them as Sophomores along to the planing and trimming department, over the elevators as Juniors to be given into the hands of lathers and scroll-sawers, down the chute as Seniors to the polishing and varnishing rooms, from which they are bounced in truck-loads out into the world, each bearing the date of his manufacture and stamped plainly with his trademark, "A Yale Man." And throughout the process the continual rah-rah-rah-ing of the machinery keeps up, drowning out the plaintive cry of the Freshman who won't be happy till he gets it.

And have you heard the song of the Machine that toots from its thousand pipes with a horrid insistence the refrain of Private Ownership and Corporate Industry, flaunting its power to the humiliated muckers of New Haven?

When Johnnie went off to Yale, to Yale,
He was a parlor boarder;
They sent him down to Eli Town
To study law and order.
They told him not to study much
Because he was so frail—
I wonder what his ma-mah will say
When Johnnie comes back from Yale?

When Johnnie comes back from Yale again,
Huroo! Huroo!
He'll greet his pa with a rah-rah-rah,
And his aunts and uncles, too.
The local band and the fire patrol
Will chase the pig up a slippery pole,
And there'll be a scream from the baseball team
When Johnnie comes home from Yale.

When Johnnie went off to Yale, to Yale
He was a son of peace, man.
But he soon became the pet of Fame
When he whipped a fat policeman.
He sat up nights by the candle lights
Till his face grew rather pale—
But I wonder what his ma-mah will say
When Johnnie comes home from Yale?

When Johnnie comes home from Yale again,
Hurang! Hurang!
He'll stop the clocks for several blocks
And the fire-alarms will clang.
The family horse will neigh and prance
And grandmamma will try to dance;

The Author Disguised

'Twill be for the good of the neighborhood
When Johnnie comes home from Yale.

When Johnnie went off to Yale, to Yale,
His foliage was vernal;
But now on his vest he's wearing a crest
In an order of Greek fraternal.
His friends refined are awfully kind
In keeping him out of jail—
But I wonder what his ma-mah will say
When Johnnie comes home from Yale?

At Harvard learning is kept in cold storage—At the Sign of the Marble Minerva. At Yale the article is served on a hot platter, fresh from the great brain-works which glow continually like a blast-furnace, lighting up the New Haven sky on winter nights with the radiance of an aurora borealis. No earnest reformer can go to New Haven without feeling a little blue.

"We are democratic," says the Machine with a thousand voices at Yale.

The brakeman, ere he lets you off the train, yells:

Noo-oo Haven! Noo-oo Haven!
Democ-ra-see
With a one, two, three!
And here you be,
Right at the great Univer-si-tee!
Rah-rah-rah, Yale!!

The cabman who drives you up to the campus repeats the cheer as he slaps up his lame horse, and the colored waiter at the hotel shouts in your ear:

Lam' chops, po'k chops,
Coffee or tea, sah!
Mince pie, apple pie,
Which'll it be, sah?
We's democracktick heah, yo' see,
Eberybody loves de Facultee,
Yah, yah, yah!
Rah-rah-rah!
Yale!

The Democratic Machine will tell you that there are no money-prejudices among the students. I myself have noticed that the railway president's son living in Vanderbilt carries with him no social stigma. He is often as well received, I am told, as any poor student-waiter in the University eating-clubs. If a man runs an automobile and keeps a yacht, his snobbish display of personal property is apt to be overlooked as merely incidental to his many sterling qualities, and any embarrassment he may feel is promptly drowned in a sea of cheers.

This system has led to the Personal Popularity Habit which, as practiced at Yale, has become a violent physical exercise, often more fraught with dangers than the practice and application of football. Only last year the most popular man in his class was slapped on the back until he became a cripple for life.

Everywhere it is a case of Yale-fellow-well-met. The son of Eli is surcharged with temperament, which makes it necessary for him to be yelling, singing, talking, practical joking continually. When there is nothing really important in the way of athletics or ambrosial nights to hold the undergrad's attention, he thinks of his neglected education and buys a "pony" with which he rough-rides for a brief season through Ancient Greece. President Roosevelt has a Yale temperament with a Harvard training, much as Secretary Taft has a Yale training with a Heidelberg shape. And here the question naturally arises: Have our Universities been responsible, after all, for the shaping of our great national figures?

It has been pretty clearly proven of late that Yale has for years been secretly in league with the Beef Trust. Where, if not, has she secured her football material with so little effort—those Gargantuan, leviathan mounds of beef and bone which have kept the Blue Pennant aloft as if planted in solid rock? And what reply can she make, furthermore, when I charge her with maintaining a special secret Standard Oil pipe-line direct from the Rockefeller tank to the consuming-can of New Haven? *The dormitories of Yale burn annually enough midnight oil substantially to enrich the Rockefeller interests!* (The italics are my own.) I have told you where Yale gets her oil and her beef. Now let me show you what she does with them.

Any evening after ten, during the University term, if you happen to be abroad in the streets of New Haven you will notice that the atmosphere has suddenly become thick, heavy, tarry, almost prehensile, like the closest soft-coal gusts of Pittsburg. You choke, you sneeze as the burning, poisonous gases enter your lungs—and you find a student, already semi-asphyxiated, singing the Stein Song and clinging desperately to a lamp-post. Ask any policeman about this. He will tell you that it has always been so after ten o'clock, when the midnight oil is beginning to burn and is sputtering, smoking from a thousand windows around the campus.

When first I whiffed this penetrating, this memorable odor, I was standing in front of a large dormitory from which twinkled many yellow lights where, doubtless, as many Pale Students were grinding in solitary confinement for to-morrow's exams. Moved by the spirit of investigation, I quickly disguised myself as a college charwoman and crept stealthily, unnoticed, through the dark hallways, till I paused before a

The Nut Club

door over which the midnight oil glared through a transom. I could hear the voices of many Pale Students within, and remembered that it was a college custom for Pale Students to foregather to discuss the work of the day and to-morrow's tasks. But I could not so easily account for the click-click-ing sound which came from within, nor for the gist of the following conversation:

First Pale Student: Look-a-here, footless Freshman, you've got to put in if you want cards. Children can't ride free in this caboose.

Second P. S.: Drop a seed! Drop a seed!

Third P. S.: Don't sit there with that Harvard expression ——

Fourth P. S.: I'm positively pie-eyed. This is the saddest game of the century.

Second P. S.: Lay a little more lather in my mug! I'm thirsty.

Fifth P. S.: Two cards for the Blind Chicken, please. (*A pause.*)

Fourth P. S.: I bet five tablets.

Second P. S.: I fade.

First P. S. I'll come at you for ten more.

Third P. S.: What you got?

Fourth P. S.: Two dots and a pair o' Johnnies.

Third P. S.: Beat you. Got three chorus-girls—all peaches!

Fifth P. S.: Up in the air!

First P. S.: Stung!

The New Haven Distilleries of College Spirits are responsible, I believe, for the increasing habit of holding alumni reunions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on the Yale campus. Once a year the dear old Class of Umpty-steen comes roaring back to drink soft and sparkling drinks till far into the gray A. M., when they adjourn to the college square to play hop-scotch, or paint their class numerals on the chapel steps. Sometimes there are three or four of these reunions going on at once, sometimes more. The class of '96, holding its decennial, will collide with the class of '91, holding its quindecennial. The two classes will stop and give the yell in front of Durfee, when along will roll the famous class of '56, holding its semi-centennial. These three parties, locking arms, will combine and hold a fusion meeting on the walk. They will promise earnestly to come back next year. They always do. There is no such thing as really graduating from Yale, because the reunions keep the old fellows on the campus most of the time.

During a quiet hour of the morning I saw a solitary figure sitting on the fence in front of Durfee. It was that of a very old man whose beard brushed the pebbles of the walk.

"You'd better get off that fence, Grandfather," I said, "or some Sophomore will come along and do you harm."

"I don't much care," sighed the old 'un. "This fence ain't like the one we had 'way back in ——"

"Then you're a Yale man?" I cried.

"Well, I guess!" answered the graybeard. "I'm here on this here fence a-holdin' my class centennial. I'm the only survivin' member o' the class o' 1806, and reunions are gettin' to be pretty solum affairs lately. I'm too young a man to be sittin' lonesome on a fence without doin' something for my college, so here goes the class-yell, anyhow."

He drew his corn-cob pipe from between his gums, and with quavering enthusiasm wheezed:

"Ricketty whee, ricketty whix,
Anno 1806 -
Wow!!"

And the reunion habit has penetrated the undergraduate body so far that even the Freshmen hold reunions between classes and continue them till a late hour in the evening. The reunion system is based on a double-unit known as "chums," for the college life moves first by classes, then two-by-two: Damon & Pythias, David & Jonathan, Scylla & Charybdis, Klaw & Erlanger.

"Chums," college sentiment, class-yells, songs, all contribute to a somewhat adhesive combination which has come to be known as the "dear old" college story. This form of narrative is not confined to the student-literature. It breaks out now and then on the stage or in current fiction, and is altogether a close second to the home-and-mawther song as a tickler among the tear-vats. To be successful, the "dear old" college story must be chock full of local color, and must run something like the following feeble and liberally expurgated sample:

"The twilight was falling over the dear old campus as the dear old Prexy's carriage drove by. Students were straggling in from all sides, returning from their dinners at dear old Commons back to the dormitories. Alone in his room sat dear old Jim Hooligan puffing at his dear old briar, a look of sadness on his handsome face. Around the dear old wall were many dear old trophies, dear old steins, dear old tennis-rackets, dear old prom. programs, and the dear old banjo which Jim had twanged so merrily in the dear old Banjo Club. Jim was weeping.

"Out by the dear old fence the dear old Glee Club was sweetening the twilight with their close-harmony-barber-shop-symphony strains. The refrain of dear old 'Boola' rose plaintively to Jim's open window.

"'I wish "Thug"—dear old "Thug" Thomas—would come home,' thought Jim, grasping the beer-keg doggedly. 'Thug' had been Jim's confidante for four years now—who else could advise him like Thug—dear old Thug?

"There came a rap at the door. 'Ah,' thought Jim, 'that must be the dear old fellow now.' The knob turned violently. The figure of a woman stood in the door. She fumbled with her cloak a moment, then laid a slip of paper in Jim's hand. It was the dear old laundry bill.

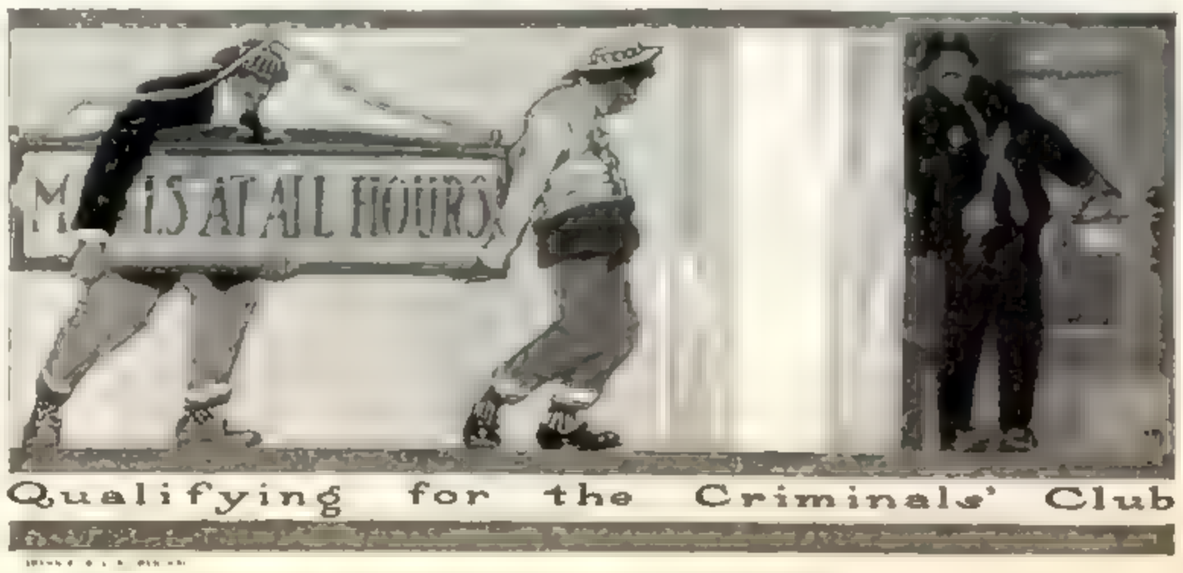
"'How is it, Mrs. Sullivan, that this bill is twelve dollars?' asked Jim sternly.

"'Everything comes dear at dear old Yale,' answered the good woman.

"And thereupon Jim closed the dear old door softly in her face."

Another serious objection to the Democracy Evil, as I found it clinging to the tines of my muck-fork, was its influence on the Ego of every young man. It seems that the human ego is a rather valuable thing, and awfully hard to get fixed when once out of order. I never really appreciated this until I heard about it in a lecture by a Professor of Applied Theology. His talk was on "Yale Democracy," and he showed how the Yale system was all wrong, because it made the young men in the same class do the same things, take the same studies, think the same thoughts, play the same jokes in chapel, till they had all "distributed their egos" so thoroughly that they always graduated as alike as a thousand matches. He said that you could tell a member of the class of '96 by his left shoulder being higher than his right, and that, to determine a man of the class of '98, all you had to do was to look for an eye-tooth missing on the left side of the upper jaw.

The "Dear Old" College Story



Qualifying for the Criminals' Club

The Reunion Habit

Because these words were uttered by a clergyman I believed them explicitly. Furthermore, I put the speech down as another black mark against the Democratic Machine and proceeded to gather evidence. In less than an hour (such is the rapidity with which I investigate) I went over the whole student-life from Grammar School Rush to Tap Day, and I found that students chosen from the mass for social honors like the Skull and Bones or Wolf's Head were not thus distinguished because they were different from their fellows, but because they were more like them than any one else.

But as more eloquent than any experience of my own let me give you an extract from the affidavit of W. John Smythe, of New Canaan, Connecticut. His experience will prove how insidious, how effacing is the effect of the Democratic System on an impressionable lad. Any one wishing to substantiate the details of the following story may call on Mr. Smythe at New Canaan. He has moved away, I believe.

"Before my boy, Archibald, went to college," the affidavit reads, "I called him to me and said: 'My son, you come of a fast dying but proud race—the Smythes. The Smythes have been notable for strength of character rather than beauty. You have the Smythe nose, the Smythe knock-knees, the Smythe stutter, and, upon close examination, I observe that you have the Smythe strawberry mark under the left ear. Remember, my boy, you are not like other, commonplace lads. You are marked by a distinctive homeliness which makes you a Smythe and nothing else. Don't let them'—here, I confess, my voice broke into a sob—'don't let the Yale Spirit of Democracy rob you of your birthright. Good-by!'

"Archibald was gone nearly a year, during which period my wife and I longed almost continually to see the symphonic Smythe features of our dear boy. At last, toward commencement week, we could bear it no longer—so we went quietly to New Haven prepared to give Archibald a little surprise.

"As we neared the campus we saw many sights which disturbed our minds very much. On Elm Street two young men were running away with a large sign which said 'Meals at All Hours.' It was a cheap, gaudy sign, and I could not understand why those youths, who looked refined and prosperous, should have cared to steal anything so inexpensive. Suddenly a policeman leaped in front of them from a doorway and cried 'Halt!' The boys halted and the policeman held them till the patrol drove up.

"As the students were being put aboard the patrol several of their fellows, to the number of seventy-five or eighty, all well-raised youths, apparently, crowded about the young men and shook them cordially by the hand, saying: 'Congratulations, dear old boy—I knew you'd get in!'—and: 'Bully for you, Swipes. We'll make you president of the Club!'

"I was naturally interested as well as shocked, so I inquired what they meant by 'the Club.'

"'Why, the Criminals' Club,' said one of the students; 'you can't get in unless you've ragged something and been pinched for it. These fellows have been trying to get in for almost four years now. They graduate in about two weeks, and they'll be proud to tell their folks that they belong to such a nice club.'

"I did not dare express my views on such a custom" (goes on the affidavit), "but I sent my wife back to the hotel and proceeded alone; for she has a weak heart, and I feared the worst. Presently along came a youth who stopped suddenly and looked at me with suspicious enthusiasm. This seemed especially strange, because the lads whom I had met up to now had passed me by with indifference. He walked around me three times, put his finger on his lips and wrote down something in a notebook. After a while he came up to me and asked politely:

"'Pardon me, but are you Mr. Depew?'

(Concluded on Page 30)

GASPAR RUIZ

XI

By JOSEPH CONRAD

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THE two young English officers were convinced that Ruiz was mad. How do you say that—tile loose—eh? But the doctor, an observant Scotsman with much shrewdness and philosophy in his character, told me that it was a very curious case of possession. I met him many years afterward, but he remembered the experience very well. He told me, too, that, in his opinion, that woman did not lead Gaspar Ruiz away into the practice of sanguinary treachery by direct persuasion, but by the subtle way of awakening and keeping alive in his simple mind a burning sense of an irreparable wrong. Maybe. Maybe. But I would say that she poured half of her vengeful soul into the strong clay of that man as you may pour intoxication, madness, poison into an empty cup.

"If he wanted war he got it in earnest when our victorious army began to return from Peru. Systematic operations were planned against this blot on the honor and prosperity of our hardly-won independence. General Robles commanded with his well-known ruthless severity. Savage reprisals were exercised on both sides and no quarter was given in the field. Having won my promotion in the Peru campaign, I was a captain on the staff.

"Gaspar Ruiz found himself hard pressed; at the same time we heard, by means of a fugitive priest, who had been carried off from his presbytery and galloped eighty miles to perform the christening ceremony, that a daughter was born to them. To celebrate the event, I suppose, he executed one or two brilliant forays clear away at the rear of our forces and defeated the detachments sent out to cut off his retreat. General Robles had nearly a stroke of apoplexy from rage. He took to railing and storming at me about my strong man. And, from our impatience to end this inglorious campaign, I am afraid that all we young officers became reckless and agog to take undue risks on service.

"Nevertheless, slowly, inch by inch as it were, our columns were closing upon Gaspar Ruiz, though he had managed to raise all the Araucanian nation of wild Indians against us. Then, a year or more later, our Government became aware, through its agents and spies, that he had actually entered into alliance with Carreras, the so-called dictator of the so-called republic of Mendoza on the other side of the mountains. Whether he had a deep political intention, or whether he wished only to secure a safe retreat for his wife and child while he pursued remorselessly against us his war of surprises and massacres, I cannot tell. The alliance, however, was a fact. Defeated in his attempt to check our advance from the sea, he retreated with his usual swiftness, and, preparing for another hard and hazardous tussle, began by sending his wife with the little girl across the Pequena range of mountains on the frontier of Mendoza.

"Now, Carreras, under the guise of politics and liberalism, was a scoundrel of the deepest dye, and under his rule the unhappy State of Mendoza was the prey of thieves, robbers, traitors and murderers. He was, under a noble exterior, a man without heart, pity, honor or conscience. He aspired to nothing but tyranny, and, though he would have made use of Gaspar Ruiz for his nefarious designs, yet he soon became aware that to propitiate the Chilean Government would answer his purpose better. I blush to say that he made proposals to our Government to deliver up, on certain conditions, the wife and child of the man who had trusted him and that his offer was accepted. So, on her way to Mendoza over the Pequena Pass, she was betrayed by her escort and given up to the officer in command of the Chilean fort on the upland at the foot of the main Cordillera range.

"This atrocious transaction might have cost me dear, for, as a matter of fact, I was a prisoner in Gaspar Ruiz' camp when he received the news. I had been captured during a reconnaissance, my escort of a few troopers being speared by Indians of his bodyguard. I was saved from the same fate because he recognized my features just in time. No doubt my friends thought I was dead and I would not have given much for my life at any time. But he treated me very well, because, he said, I had always believed in his innocence and had tried to serve him when he was a victim of injustice.

"'And now,' was his speech to me, 'you shall see that I always speak the truth. You are safe.'

"I did not think I was very safe when I was called up to go to him one night. He paced up and down like a wild beast, exclaiming: 'Betrayed! Betrayed!' He walked up to me, clenching his fists:

"'I could cut your throat!'

"'Will that give your wife back to you?' I said as quietly as I could.

"'And the *chica!*' he yelled out as if mad. He fell into a chair and laughed in frightful, boisterous manner. 'Oh, no; you are safe!'

"I assured him that his wife's life was safe, but I did not say what I was convinced of: that he would never see her again. He wanted war to the death, and the war could only end with his own death.

"He gave me a strange, inexplicable look and sat muttering blandly: 'In their hands! In their hands!'

"I kept as still as death.

"'What am I doing here?' he cried, and opening the door he yelled out orders to saddle and mount. 'What is it?' he stammered, coming up to me 'The Pequena fort; a fort of palisades! Nothing! I would get her back if she were hidden in the very heart of the mountain!' He amazed me by adding with an effort: 'I carried her off in my two arms while the earth trembled. And the child, at least, is mine!'

"Those were bizarre words; but I had no time to wonder.

"'You shall go with me,' he said violently. 'I may want to parley, and any other messenger from Ruiz, the outlaw, would have his throat cut.'

"'Good Shot?' He Asked"

"This was true enough. Between him and the rest of incensed mankind there could be no communication held according to the customs of honorable war.

"In less than half an hour we were in the saddle, flying wildly through the night. He had only an escort of twenty men at his quarters, but would not wait for more. He sent, however, messengers to Peneleo, the Indian chief, then ranging in the foothills, directing him to bring his warriors to the uplands and meet him at the lake called the Eye of Water, near whose shores the frontier fort of Pequena was built.

"We crossed the lowlands with that untried rapidity of movement which had made Gaspar Ruiz' raids so famous. We followed the lower valleys up to their precipitous heads. The ride was not without its dangers. A cornice road on a perpendicular wall of basalt wound itself around a buttressing rock, and at last we emerged from the gloom of the valley upon the upland of Pequena.

"It was a plain of green grass and thin, flowering bushes; but, high above our heads, patches of snow hung in the folds and crevices of the great walls of rock. The little lake was as round as a staring eye. The garrison of the fort were just driving in their small herd of cattle when we appeared. Then the great wooden gates swung to and that four-square inclosure of broad, blackened stakes, pointed at the top and barely hiding the grass roofs of the huts inside, seemed deserted, empty, without a single soul.

"But when summoned to surrender by a man who, at Gaspar's order, rode fearlessly forward, they answered by a volley which rolled him and his horse over. I heard Ruiz by my side grind his teeth.

"'It does not matter,' he said. 'Now you go.'

"Worn and faded as its rags were, the vestiges of my uniform were recognized and I was allowed to approach within speaking distance, and then I had to wait, because a voice clamoring through a loophole with joy and astonishment would not allow me to place a word. It was the voice of Major Pajol, an old friend. He, like my other comrades, had thought me killed long time ago.

"'Spur your horse, man!' he yelled in the greatest excitement. 'We will swing the gate open for you.'

"I let the bridle fall out of my hand and shook my head.

"'I am on my honor!' I cried.

"'To him!' Pajol shouted with infinite disgust.

"'He promises you your life!'

"'Our life is our own! And do you, Santierra, advise us to surrender to that *rastrero*?'

"'No!' I shouted. 'But he can cut you off from water.'

"'Then she would be the first to suffer! You may tell him that. Look here—this is all nonsense: we shall dash out and capture you.'

"'You shall not catch me alive,' I said firmly.

"'Imbecile!'

"'Stop!' I continued hastily. 'Do not open the gate!' And I pointed at the multitude of Peneleo's Indians who covered the shores of the lake. I had never seen so many of these savages together. Their lances seemed as numerous as stalks of grass. Their hoarse voices made a vast inarticulate sound like the murmur of the sea.

"My friend Pajol was swearing to himself. 'Well, then—go back!' he shouted exasperated. But, as I swung round, he repented, for I heard him say hurriedly: 'Shoot the fool's horse before he gets away.'

"He had good marksmen. Two shots rang out in the very act of turning, my horse staggered, fell and lay still as if struck by lightning. I had my feet out of the stirrups and rolled clear of him. But I did not attempt to rise.

"It was lying on the ground that I saw the masses of Indians begin to move. They rode up in squadrons, trailing their long *chuzos*, then dismounted out of musket-shot and, throwing off their fur mantles, advanced naked to the attack, stamping their feet and shouting in cadence. A sheet of flame flashed along the face of the fort without checking their steady march. They passed me and crowded right up to the very stakes, flourishing their broad knives. But this palisade was not fastened together with hide lashings, but with cross-beams and long iron nails which they could not cut. This was too much for them. Dismayed at the failure of their usual method of forcing an entrance, the heathen who had marched so steadily against a murderous fire now broke and fled.

"Directly they had passed me on their advance I had got up and had rejoined Gaspar Ruiz on a low ridge which jutted upon the plains. The musketry of his own men had covered the attack, but now, at a sign from him, a trumpet sounded the 'cease fire.' Together we looked in silence at the hopeless rout.

"'It must be a siege then,' he muttered. And I detected him wringing his hands stealthily.

"But what sort of siege could it be? There was no need for me to repeat to him my friend Pajol's message: he dared not cut the water off from the besieged. They had plenty of meat. And, indeed, if they had not had he would have sent food into the stockade had he been able. But, as a matter of fact, it was we on the plain who were beginning to feel the pinch of hunger.

"Peneleo, the Indian chief, sat by our fire, folded in his ample mantle of guanaco skins. He was an athletic savage with an enormous square shock head of hair resembling a straw beehive in shape and size, and with grave, surly features. In his bad, broken Spanish he repeated, growling like a bad-tempered wild beast, that, if an opening ever so small were made in the stockade, his men would march in and get the *señora*—not otherwise.

"Gaspar Ruiz, sitting opposite him, kept his eyes fixed on the fort, night and day, as it were, in awful silence and immobility. Meantime, by runners from the lowlands that arrived nearly every day, we heard of the defeat of one of his lieutenants on the Maijoo valley. Scouts sent afar brought news of a column of infantry advancing through distant passes to the relief of the fort. They were slow, but we could trace their toilful progress up the lower valleys. I wondered why he did not march to attack and destroy this threatening force in some wild gorge fit for an ambuscade in accordance with his genius for partisan warfare. But his genius seemed to have left him to his despair.

"'The Child is all Right,' I Cried Encouragingly"

"It was obvious to me that he could not tear himself away from the sight of the fort. I protest to you, *señores*, that I was moved almost to pity by the sight of this powerless strong man sitting on the ridge indifferent to sun, to rain, to cold, to wind; with his hands clasped round his legs and his chin resting on his knees, gazing—gazing—gazing.

"And the fort he kept his eyes fastened on was as still and silent as himself. The garrison gave no sign of life. They did not even answer the desultory fire of his men directed at the loopholes.

"One night, as I strolled past him, he, without changing his attitude, spoke to me unexpectedly.

"'I have sent for a gun,' he said. 'I shall have time to get her back and retreat before your Robles manages to crawl up here.'

"He had sent for a gun to the plains.

"It was long in coming, but at last it came. It was a seven-pounder field gun. Dismounted and lashed crosswise to two long poles, it had been carried up the narrow paths between two mules with ease. His wild cry of exultation at daybreak when he saw the gun-escort emerge from the valley rings in my ears now.

"But, *señores*, I have no words to depict his amazement, his fury, his despair and distraction when he heard that the animal loaded with the gun-carriage had, during the last night march, somehow or other tumbled down a precipice. He broke into menaces of death and torture against the escort. I kept out of his way all that day, lying behind some bushes and wondering what he would do now. Retreat was what was left for him. But he could not retreat.

"I saw below me his artillerist, Jorge, an old Spanish soldier, building up a sort of structure with heaped-up saddles. The gun, ready loaded, was lifted on to that, but at the act of firing the shot the whole thing collapsed and the bullet flew high above the stockade.

"Nothing more was attempted. One of the ammunition-mules had been lost, too, and they had no more than six shots to fire—ample enough to batter down the gate providing the gun was well laid. This was impossible without it being properly mounted. There was no time or means to construct a carriage. Already every moment I expected to hear Robles' bugle-calls echo among the crags.

"Peneleo, wandering about uneasily, draped in his skins, sat down for a moment near me, growling his usual tale.

"'Make an *entrada*—a hole. If make a hole, *bueno*. If not make a hole then *vamos*—we must go away.'

"Toward evening I saw with surprise the Indians making preparation as for another assault. Their lines stood ranged in the shadow of the mountains. On the plain in front of the first gate I saw a group of men swaying about in the same place.

"I walked down the ridge disregarded. The moonlight in the clear air of the uplands was bright as day, but the intense shadows confused my sight and I could not make out what they were doing. I heard the voice of Jorge, the artillerist, say in a queer, doubtful tone: 'It is loaded, *señor*.'

"Then another voice in that group pronounced firmly the words: 'Bring the *riata* here.'

"It was the voice of Gaspar Ruiz!

"Then a silence fell in which the popping shots of the besieged army rang out sharply, who, too, had observed the group. But the distance was too great, and in the spatter of spent musket-balls cutting up the ground, the group opened, closed, swayed, giving me a glimpse of busy, stooping figures in its midst. I drew nearer, doubting whether this was a weird vision, a suggestive and insensate dream.

"A strangely stifled voice commanded: 'Haul the hitches tighter.'

"'*Si, señor*,' several other voices answered in tones of awed alacrity.

"Then the stifled voice said:

"'Like this. I must be free to breathe.'

"Then there was a concerned noise of many men together.

"'Help him up, *hombres!* Steady! Under the other arm!'

"That deadened voice ordered:

(Continued on Page 31)

Building Up a Retail Business

By Harlow N. Higinbotham

The Only Safe Course is to Go to His Jobber and Give Him Full Information

THE opening of a new store in a community is always the signal for a transference of trade which is most deceptive to the proprietor of the new establishment, and if he is not a man of rare shrewdness and has not a natural faculty for credits, he will be sure to make the remark:

"My trade is good—'way beyond my expectations!"

Judging from surface indications, this observation is warranted. But why? Because the new store always gets the customers who have accumulated debts or grievances of some kind with the merchants who are already established, and who have sifted out their customers. Instead of considering this sudden influx of trade as an omen of prosperity it should be regarded in exactly the opposite manner, and so treated. Rightly considered, it is a red lantern sign of "Danger Ahead." These rejections from the other and established merchants are generally shrewd enough to pay cash for the first or second and perhaps the third month, and then they begin to ask for credit. Generally this is done very adroitly, and the request at the start will be to allow the amount to run "until Saturday night," or until "the first of the month." When this time comes the game of partial payment will be begun. Generally this is done on the basis of special pleas, alleging sickness or some phase or other of "bad luck."

But one thing may be depended upon. This class of customers will play the game in a progressive ratio and see that the balance against them is increased week after week and month after month. What is the result?

When the storekeeper finally wakes up to the situation he will find that the customer has him at a disadvantage. "If I press him too hard," reasons the storekeeper, "I am likely to lose the whole account, and therefore I must deal gently with him."

There are few things more difficult in merchandizing than to get a "slow pay" customer to reduce a large balance by gradual payment. In fact, the storekeeper who is shrewd enough to accomplish this is too keen to get into such a situation with many of his customers. The merchant who gets a line of these undesirable customers is under the necessity of keeping them carefully in his mind, and this, as a rule, means that he must "carry in his head" the balance against them—or practically so. Not only this, but he must have his clerks do likewise. This is not so easy a matter as it might seem, and in most cases the storekeeper finds himself constantly allowing a "slow customer" to increase, rather than forcing him to diminish, his balance.

Inevitably the result of doing this kind of a business is that the merchant is finally forced to ask his jobber to carry him. When he reaches this stage his first inclination, generally speaking, is to think that by spreading out and dealing with other jobbers, as a temporary measure, he can cover his situation in the eyes of jobbers with whom he has previously placed the burden of his trade.

Instead of concealing his predicament, this expedient is a sure way of giving notice to the credit man of his old jobbing house that he is in hard straits, for no modern credit man fails to understand the significance of this process of "spreading out" when the merchant in question is a little slow in his payments.

The only safe course for the storekeeper who finds himself in these straits is to go to his jobber and give him full information, and to keep his indebtedness bunched together instead of scattered about. If the man is worth saving, the jobber principally interested will give him the support of extended credit, and will also aid him by sound advice and practical suggestions suited to his individual needs.

When the unfortunate and deluded storekeeper follows an opposite course and attempts to cover his embarrassment by spreading out to new jobbers, the result will be that the old jobber, or perhaps some of the ones to whom he has shifted, will realize that "the race is to the swift," and that the first man to close in on the unstable customer will be likely to get the most out of him.

I know one decidedly successful merchant who determined to make his credits according to a fixed principle, and that he would not vary his system under any conditions. Nominally, he was supposed to do a cash business, but at last felt that he must extend credit to a portion of his customers. He did it in this way: He would not even discuss the opening of an account with a customer about whom he felt any doubt whatever; then, when the man came in to arrange for an account, the merchant asked him: "How much of a line of credit do you wish me to give you?"

"Well, fifty dollars," responded the customer.

"And now about the question of time?" inquired the storekeeper.

"Make it sixty days," replied the customer.

"Very well," answered the storekeeper, "I will give you just what you ask for in the matter of credit, and will make the memorandum right here on the ledger page which will carry your account. But let us understand one thing clearly, right from the start. You are not to ask me for five cents more than the amount of credit I have given you, nor are you to ask me for an extension of time. Certainly you can't complain at my making this rule rigid, when I have given you at the beginning all that you have asked for. You have set your own stakes, and cannot reasonably resent it if you are asked to abide by them."

This system of credit worked admirably in the case of the storekeeper to whom I referred, for the reason that he held every customer rigidly to the limitations fixed at the outset. Though the storekeeper should keep the most careful and constant watch upon every one in his employ, he should be slow to accuse a clerk or any other member of his force of dishonesty. Lax methods of accounting are often, if not generally, the cause of apparent discrepancies which lead to suspecting crookedness on the part of employees. The merchant who does not keep his books in a condition which will tell him at any time just exactly his standing, to a dollar, is in a poor position to bring accusations against a clerk or cashier unless he has absolute knowledge of that employee's dishonesty or misconduct.

It is scarcely too much to say that the first impulse on the part of the storekeeper who arrives at the conclusion that there must be a "leak somewhere" in his business is to accuse a clerk of stealing. There is neither justice nor commonsense in acting upon this impulse without solid facts upon which to base the accusation. Many a merchant by hasty action of this sort has not only deprived himself of a useful assistant, but he has also shamed and humiliated, if not actually disgraced, a clerk entitled to respect and confidence. If a merchant employs his relatives he should, on their account as much as his own, watch them with the same care that he would a clerk entirely unrelated to him. Not only does this course establish a proper sense of responsibility, but it also promotes the feeling among his help that he is fair and impartial. Again, if a situation arises in the store which seems clearly to indicate that some employee is indulging in peculations, the relative of the proprietor is in a far better position, under a system of impartial scrutiny, than if the head of the establishment took it for granted that it was only necessary for him to watch those of his help not connected with him by family ties.

A practically universal source of loss to country merchants is the failure to charge all the goods which go out of the store. It is scarcely too much to say that there is not a single country store in existence which does not suffer a loss of one to five per cent. of its business from this cause. Consequently, the first thing for the wide-awake storekeeper to do is to settle it with himself that *not a dime's worth of goods shall go out of his establishment unless charged or paid for.*

This resolution cannot be made really effective unless the storekeeper has determination enough to resort to the radical measure of throwing out the time-honored old-style day-book, as a book of original entry, and substituting in its place the duplicate carbon-slip system. No matter how frequently and emphatically he may tell his clerks to charge every item "if the house is on fire," they will sooner or later begin to leave items uncharged, if the old day-book system is adhered to. The clerk, for example, is standing in front of the store, doing up a package of fruit for a charge customer, when a carriage drives up and its occupant beckons to the clerk to come to the edge of the curbstone. In the course of taking the order of the lady in the carriage, he naturally forgets to charge the fruit which he hastily pushed into the hands of the other customer. If an instance of this kind has occurred once it has ten thousand times in the history of storekeeping, and that is putting it very mildly. As a matter of fact, it is a daily occurrence in almost every town in the United States. There is no remedy for it excepting to change the system.

Each clerk should be supplied with a little flimsy book of the style used by all clerks in modern city department stores. Each leaf of this book is made up of a stub and detachable leaf with a sheet of carbon between, so that the entries on one are manifolded upon the other at the same writing.

There is room for several items on each slip and stub, and the stubs, with their corresponding slips, are numbered consecutively throughout the book. The rule for handling these books is, that each purchaser, whether a charge or a cash customer, must receive along with his goods the slip containing the memorandum of his purchases. The customers very soon learn that they are expected to take this memorandum, and consequently they quickly fall into the way of expecting it.

This system has various other advantages beyond that of making it more difficult for the clerk to let goods go without charging them. As each clerk has his individual charge book it is a very easy matter for the storekeeper to keep accurate account of the business done by each clerk. In other words, he has readily at his hand the total of each clerk's sales for a day, a week, a month or a year. Again, it should be remembered that the mere volume of a clerk's

(Concluded on Page 28)

This Class of Customers Will Play the Game in a Progressive Ratio

Editor's Note—This is the second of four papers on the successful conduct of a retail business. The third will appear shortly.

THE FIGHTING CHANCE

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

AUTHOR OF IOLE, ETC.

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XII · Continued

MORTIMER had gone from his interview with Plank directly to Quarrier's office, missing the gentleman he was seeking by such a small fraction of a minute that he realized they must have passed one another in the elevators, he ascending while Quarrier was descending

Mortimer turned and hurried to the elevator, hoping to come up with Quarrier in the rotunda, or possibly in the street outside; but he was too late, and, furious to think of the time he had wasted with Plank, he crawled into a hansom and bade the driver take him to a number he gave, designating one of the new limestone basement houses on the upper West Side.

All the way uptown, as he jolted about in his seat, he angrily regretted the meeting with Plank, even in spite of the check. What demon had possessed him to boast—to display his hand when there had been no necessity? Plank was still ready to give him aid at a crisis—had always been ready. Time enough when Plank turned stingy to use persuasion; time enough when Plank attempted to dodge him to employ a club. And now, for no earthly reason, intoxicated with his own vanity, catering to his own long-smoldering resentment, he had used his club on a willing horse—deliberately threatened a man whose gratitude had been good for many a check yet.

"Ass that I am!" fumed Mortimer; "now, when I'm stuck, I'll have to go at him with the club, if I want any money out of him. Confound him, he's putting me in a false position! He's trying to make it look like extortion! I won't do it! I'm no blackmailer. I'll starve before I go to him again! No blundering, clumsy Dutchman can make a blackmailer out of *me* by holding hands with that scoundrelly wife of mine! That's the reason he did it, too! Between them they are trying to make my loans from Plank look like blackmail! It would serve them right if I took them up—if I called their bluff, and stuck Plank up in earnest! But I won't, to please them! I won't do any dirty thing like that, to humor them! Not much!"

He lay back, rolling about in the jouncing cab, scowling at space.

"Not much!" he repeated. "I'll shake down Quarrier, though! I'll make him pay for his treachery—scaring me out of Amalgamated! That will be restitution, not extortion!"

He was the angrier because he had been for days screwing up his courage to the point of seeking Quarrier face to face. He had not wished to do it; the scene, and his own attitude in it, could only be repugnant to him, although he continually explained to himself that it was restitution, not extortion.

But whatever it was, he didn't like to figure in it, and he had hung back as long as circumstances permitted. But his new lodgings and his new friends were expensive; and Plank, he supposed, was off somewhere fishing; so he hung on as long as it was possible; then, exasperated by necessity, started for Quarrier's office, only to miss him by a few seconds because he was fool enough to waste his temper and his opportunity in making an enemy out of a friend!

"Oh," he groaned, "what an ass I am!" And he got out of his cab and entered a very new limestone basement house with red geraniums blooming on the window-sill.

The interior of the house was attractive in a rather bright, new, clean fashion. There seemed to be a great deal of white woodwork about, a wilderness of slender white spindles supporting the dark, rich mahogany hand-rail of the stairways; elaborate white grilles between snowy Corinthian pillars separating the hall from the drawing-room, where a pale gilt mirror over a white Colonial mantel reflected a glass chandelier and paneled walls hung with pale blue silk.

All was new, very clean, very quiet; the maid, too, who appeared at the sound of the closing door and took his hat and gloves, was as newly groomed as the floors and woodwork, and so noiseless as to be conspicuous in her swift, silent movements.

And into the tinted light, framed in palest blue and white, waddled Mortimer, appropriate as a June-bug scrambling in a Sèvres teacup.

"Anybody here?" he growled, leering into the drawing-room at a tiny grand piano cased in unvarnished Circassian walnut.

"There is nobody at home, sir," said the maid.

The southern sun was warm in the room, the windows open, but not a silken hanging stirred.

The maid left and returned with an apple cut into thin wafers and a decanter of port; and Mortimer lay back in his chair, sopping his apple in the thick, crimson wine until the apple was all gone and the decanter three-fourths empty.

It was very still in the room—so still that Mortimer, opening his eyes at longer and longer intervals to peer at the door, finally opened them no more.

. . . . . .

It was still daylight when Mortimer awoke, conscious of people about him. As he opened his eyes, a man laughed; several people seated by the windows joined in. Then, straightening up with an effort, something tumbled from his head to the floor and he started to rise.

"Oh, look out, Leroy! Don't step on my hat!" cried a girl's voice, and he sank back in his chair, gazing stupidly around.

"Hello, you people!" he said, amused; "I guess I've been asleep. Oh, is that you, Millbank? Whose hat was that—yours, Lydia?"

He got on to his massive legs and went over to shake hands with a gravity becoming the ceremony.

"How d'ye do, Miss Hutchinson? Thought you were at Asbury Park. How de do, Miss Del Garcia. Have you been out in Millbank's motor yet?"

"We broke down at McGowan's Pass," said Miss Del Garcia, laughing the laugh that had made her so attractive in A Word to the Wise.

"Muddy gasoline," nodded Millbank tersely—an iron-jawed, overgroomed man of forty, with a florid face shaved blue.

"We passed Mr. Plank's big touring-car," observed Lydia Vyse, shifting Tinto, her Japanese spaniel, to the couch and brushing the black and white hairs from her automobile coat. "How much does a car like that cost, Leroy?"

"About twenty-five thousand," he said gloomily. Then looking up, "Hold on, Millbank, don't be going! Why can't you all dine with us? Never mind your car; ours is all right, and we'll run out into the country for dinner. How about it, Miss Del Garcia?"

But both Miss Del Garcia and Miss Hutchinson had accepted another invitation, in which Millbank was also included.

They stood about, veils floating, leather-decorated coats thrown back, lingering for a while to talk the garage talk which fascinates people of their type; then Millbank looked at the clock, made his adieus to Lydia, nodded significantly to Mortimer, and followed the others downstairs

There was something amiss with his motor, for it made a startling racket in the street, finally plunging forward with a kick.

Lydia laughed as the two young girls in the tonneau turned to nod to her in mock despair; then she came running back upstairs, holding her skirt free from her hurrying little feet.

"Well?" she inquired, as Mortimer turned back from the window to confront her

"Nothing doing," he said with a sombre smile.

She looked at him, slowly divesting herself of her light leather-trimmed coat.

"I missed him," said Mortimer.

She flung the coat over a chair, stood a moment, her fingers busy with her hairpegs, then sat down on the couch, taking Tinto into her lap. She was very pretty, dark, slim, marvelously graceful in her every movement.

"I missed him," repeated Mortimer

"Can't you see him to-morrow?" she asked.

"I suppose so," said Mortimer slowly. "Oh, I hate this business!"

"Hasn't he misused your confidence? Hasn't he taken your money?" she asked. "It may be unpleasant for you to make him unbelt, but you're a coward if you don't!"

"Easy! easy, now!" muttered Mortimer; "I'm going to shake it out of him. I said I would, and I will."

"I should hope so; it's yours."

"Certainly it's mine. I wish I'd held fast now. I never supposed Plank would take hold. It was that driveling old Belwether who scared me stiff! The minute I saw him scurrying to cover like a singed cat I was fool enough to climb the first tree. I've had my lesson."

"I hope you'll give Howard his. Somebody ought to," she said quietly.

About half-past eight they dined in a white and pink dining-room furnished in dull gray walnut, and served by a stealthy, white-haired, pink-skinned butler, chiefly remarkable because it seemed utterly impossible to get a glimpse of his eyes. They had planned to go for a spin in Mortimer's motor after dinner, but in view of the Quarrier fiasco neither was in the mood for anything.

Mortimer, as usual, ate and drank heavily. He was a carnivorous man, and liked plenty of thick, fat, underdone meat. As for Lydia, her appetite was as erratic as her own impulses. Her table, always wastefully elaborate, no doubt furnished subsistence for all the relatives of her household below stairs, and was sufficient for any ambitious butler to make a decent profit on.

"Do you know, Leroy," she observed as they left the table and sauntered back into the pale blue drawing-room, "do you know that my servants haven't been paid for three months?"

"Oh, for Heaven's sake," he expostulated, "don't begin that sort of thing!"

"I only mentioned it," she said carelessly.

"I heard you all right. I'm dead tired of being up against it every day of my life. When a man has anything somebody gets it before he can side-step. When a man's dead broke there's nobody in sight to touch."

"You had an opportunity to make Howard pay you back."

"Didn't I tell you I missed him?"

"Yes. What are you going to do?"

"Do?"

"Of course. You are going to do something, I suppose?"

They had reached the gold and green room above. Lydia began pacing the length of a beautiful Kermanshah rug—a pale, delicate marvel of rose and green on a ground of ivory—lovely, but doomed to fade sooner than the pretty woman who trod it with restless, silk-shod feet.

Mortimer had not responded to her last question. She said presently: "You have never told me how you intend to make him pay you back."

"What?" inquired Mortimer, turning very red.

"I said that you haven't yet told me how you intend to make Howard return the money you lost through his juggling with your stock."

"I don't exactly know myself," admitted Mortimer, still overflushed. "I mean to put it to him squarely, as a debt of honor that he owes. I asked him whether to invest. He never warned me not to. He is morally responsible. Any man who would sit there and nod monotonously like a mandarin, knowing all the while what he was doing to wreck the company, and let a friend put into a rotten concern all the cash he could scrape together, is a swindler!"

"I think so, too," she said, studying the rose arabesques in the rug.

There was a little click of her teeth when she ended her inspection and looked across at Mortimer. Something in her expressionless gaze seemed to reassure him and give him a confidence he may have lacked.

"I want him to understand that I won't swallow that sort of contemptible treatment," asserted Mortimer, lighting a thick, dark cigar.

"I hope you'll make him understand," she said, seating herself and resting her clasped, brilliantly-ringed hands in her lap.

"Oh, I will—never fear! He has abused my confidence abominably; he has practically swindled me, Lydia. Don't you think so?"

She nodded.

"I'll tell him so, too," blustered Mortimer, shaking himself into an upright posture, and laying a pudgy, clenched fist on the table. "I'm not afraid of him! He'll find that out, too. I know enough to stagger him. Not that I mean to use it. I'm not going to have him think that my demands on him for my own property resemble extortion."

"Extortion?" she repeated.

"Yes. I don't want him to think I'm trying to intimidate him. I won't have him think I'm a grafter; but I've half a mind to shake that money out of him in one way or another."

He struck the table and looked at her for further sign of approval.

"I'm not afraid of him," he repeated. "I wish he were here, and I'd tell him so!"

She said coolly: "I was wishing that, too."

For a while they sat silent, preoccupied, avoiding each other's direct gaze. When she rose he started, watching her in a dazed way as she walked to the telephone.

"Shall I?" she asked quietly, turning to him, her hand on the receiver.

"Wait! W-what are you going to do?" he stammered.

"Call him up. Shall I?"

A dull throb of fright pulsed through him.

"You say you are not afraid of him, Leroy."

"No!" he said with an oath; "I am not. Go ahead!"

She unhooked the receiver. After a second or two her low, even voice sounded. There came a pause. She rested one elbow on the walnut shelf, the receiver tight to her ear. Then:

"Mr. Quarrier, please. . . . Yes, Mr. Howard Quarrier. . . . No, no name. Say it is on business of immediate importance. . . . Very well, then; you may say that Miss Vyse *insists* on speaking to him. . . . Yes, I'll hold the wire."

She turned, the receiver at her ear, and looked narrowly at Mortimer.

"Won't he speak to you?" he demanded.

"I'm going to find out. Hush a moment!" And in the same calm, almost childish voice: "Oh, Howard, is that you? Yes, I know I promised not to do this, but that was before things happened! . . . Well, what am I to do when it is necessary to talk to you? . . . Yes, it is necessary! . . . I tell you it is necessary! . . . I am sorry it is not convenient for you to talk to me, but I really must ask you to listen! . . . No, I shall not write. I want to talk to you to-night—*now!* Yes, you may come here, if you care to! . . . I think you had better come, Howard. . . . Because I am liable to continue ringing your telephone until you are willing to listen. . . . No, there is nobody here. I am alone. What time? . . . Very well; I shall expect you. Good-by."

She hung up the receiver and turned to Mortimer:

"He's coming up at once. Did I say anything to scare him particularly?"

"One thing's sure as preaching," said Mortimer: "he's a coward—and I'm glad of it," he added naively, relighting his cigar, which had gone out.

"If he comes up in his motor he'll be here in a few minutes," she said. "Suppose you take your hat and go out. I don't want him to think what he will think if he walks into the room and finds you waiting. You have your key, Leroy. Walk down the block; and, when you see him come in, give him five minutes."

Her voice had become a little breathless, and her color was high. Mortimer, too, seemed apprehensive. Things had suddenly begun to work themselves out too swiftly.

"Do you think that's best?" he faltered, looking about for his hat. "Tell Merkle that nobody has been here, if Quarrier should ask him. Do you think we're doing it in the best way, Lydia? It smells of a put-up job to me! But I guess it's all right. It's better for me to just happen in, isn't it? Don't forget to put Merkle wise."

He descended the stairs hastily. Merkle, of the invisible eyes, held his hat and gloves and opened the door for him.

Once on the dark street his impulse was to flee—get out, get away from the whole business. A sullen shame was pumping the hot blood up into his neck and cheeks. He strove to find an inoffensive name for what he was proposing to do, but ugly terms, synonym after synonym, crowded in to characterize the impending procedure, and he walked on angrily, half-frightened, looking back from moment to moment at the house he had just left.

On the corner he halted, breathing spasmodically, for he had struck a smarter pace than he had been aware of.

Few people passed him. Once he caught a glimmer of a policeman's buttons along the park wall, and an unpleasant shiver passed over him. At the same moment an electric hansom flew noiselessly past him. He shrank back into the shadow of a porte-cochère. The hansom halted before the limestone basement house. A tall figure left it, stood a moment in the middle of the sidewalk, then walked quickly to the front door. It opened, and the man vanished.

The hansom still waited at the door. Mortimer, his hands shaking, looked at his watch by the light of the electric bulbs flanking the gateway under which he stood.

There was not much time in which to make up his mind, yet his fright was increasing to a pitch which began to enrage him with that coward's courage which it is impossible to reckon with.

He had missed Quarrier once to-day when he had been keyed to the encounter. Was he going to miss him again through sheer terror? Besides, was not Quarrier a coward? Besides, was it not his own money? Had he not been vilely swindled by a pretended friend? Urging, lashing himself into a heavy, shuffling motion, he emerged from the porte-cochère and lurched off down the street. No time to think now, no time for second thought, for hesitation, for weakness. He had waited too long already. He had waited ten minutes instead of five. Was Quarrier going to escape again? Was he going to get out of the house before——

Fumbling with his latch-key, but with sense enough left to make no noise, he let himself in, passed silently through the reception-hall and up to the drawing-room floor, where for a second he stood listening. Then something of the perverted sportsman sent the blood quivering into his veins. He had him! He had run him down! The game was at bay.

An inrush of exhilaration steadied him. He laid his hand on the banister and mounted, gloves and hat-brim crushed in the other hand. When he entered the room he pretended to see only Lydia.

"Hello!" he said, laughing. "Are you surprised to——"

At that moment he caught sight of Quarrier, and the start he gave was genuine enough. Never had he seen in a man's visage such white concentration of anger.

"Quarrier!" he stammered, for his acting was becoming real enough to supplant art.

Quarrier had risen; his narrowing eyes moved from Mortimer to Lydia, then reverted to the man in the combination.

"Rather unexpected, isn't it?" said Mortimer, staring at Quarrier.

"Is it?" returned Quarrier in a low voice.

"I suppose so," sneered Mortimer. "Did you expect to find me here?"

"No. Did *you* expect to find me?" asked the other, with an emphasis unmistakable.

"What do you mean?" demanded Mortimer hoarsely. "What the deuce do you mean by asking me if I expected to find *you* here? If I had, I'd not have traveled down to your office to-day to see you; I'd have come here for you."

Quarrier, motionless, white to the lips, turned his eyes from one to the other.

"It doesn't look very well, does it?" asked Mortimer; and he stood there smiling, danger written all over him. "Here you are, handsome, jolly and irresistible as ever!"

Quarrier looked at Lydia, and his lips moved. "You asked me to come," he said.

"No; *you* offered to. I wished to talk to you over the wire, but"—her lip curled, and she shrugged her shoulders—"you seemed to be afraid of something or other."

"I couldn't talk to you in my own house, with guests in the room"

"Why not? Did I say anything your fashionable guests might take exception to? Am I likely to do anything of that kind? You coward!"

Quarrier stood very still, then noiselessly turned and made one step toward the door.

"One moment," interposed Mortimer blandly. "As long as I traveled downtown to see you, and find you here so unexpectedly, I may as well take advantage of this opportunity to regulate a little matter. You don't mind our talking shop for a moment, Lydia? Thank you. It's just a little business matter between Mr. Quarrier and myself—a matter concerning a few shares of stock which I once held in one of his companies, bought at par, and tumbled to ten and—— *What* is the fraction, Quarrier? I forget."

Quarrier thought deeply for a moment; then he raised his head, looking full at Mortimer, and under his silky beard an edge of teeth glimmered. "Did you wish me to take back those shares at par?" he asked.

"Exactly! I knew you would! I knew you'd see it in that way!" cried Mortimer heartily. "Confound it all, Quarrier, I've always said you were that sort of man—that you'd never let a friend in on the top floor, and kick him clear to the cellar! As a matter of fact, I sold out at ten and three-eighths. Wait! Here's a pencil. Lydia, give me that pad on your desk. Here you are, Quarrier. It's easy enough to figure out how much you owe me."

And as Quarrier slowly began tracing figures on the pad, Mortimer rambled on, growing more demonstrative and boisterous every moment. "It's white of you, Quarrier—I'll say that! Legally, of course, you could laugh at me; but I've always said your business conscience would never let you stand for this sort of thing. 'You can talk and talk,' I've told people, many a time, 'but you'll never convince me that Howard Quarrier hasn't a heart.' No, by jinks, they couldn't make me believe it! And here's my proof—here's my vindication! Lydia, would you mind hunting up that check-book I left here before din——"

He had made a mistake. The girl flushed. He choked up, and cast a glance at Quarrier. But Quarrier, if he heard, made no motion of understanding. Perhaps it had not been necessary to convince him of the conspiracy.

When he had finished his figures, he reviewed them, tracing each total with his pencil's point, then quietly handed the pad to Mortimer, who went over it, and nodded that it was correct.

Lydia rose. Quarrier said, without looking at her: "I have a blank check with me. May I use one of these pens?"

So he had brought a check! Had he supposed that a check might be necessary? Was he prepared to meet any demand of hers, too, even before Mortimer appeared?

"As long as you have a check with you, Howard," said Lydia quietly, "suppose you simply add to Mr. Mortimer's amount what you had intended to offer me?"

He stared at her without answering.

"That little remembrance. Don't you recollect?"

"No," said Quarrier.

"Why, Howard! Didn't you promise me all sorts of things when I wanted to go to your friend, Mr. Siward, and explain that it was not his fault I got into the Patroons Club? Don't you remember I felt dreadfully that he was expelled—that I was simply wild to write to the governors and tell them how I took Merkle's clothes and drove to the club and waited until I saw a lot of men go in, and then crowded in with the push?"

Mortimer was staring at Quarrier out of his protruding eyes. The girl leaned forward, deliberate, self-possessed, the red lips edged with growing scorn.

"*That* was a dirty trick!" said Mortimer heavily. He took the pad, added a figure, passed it to Lydia, and she coolly wrote a total, underscoring it heavily.

"*That* is the amount," she said.

Quarrier looked at the pad which she had tossed upon the desk. Then he slowly wetted his pen with ink, and, laying the loose check flat, began to fill it in. Afterward he dried it, and, reading it carefully, pushed it aside and rose.

"It wouldn't be advisable for you to stop payment, you know," observed Mortimer insolently, lying back in his chair and stretching his legs.

"I know," said Quarrier, pausing to turn on them a deathly stare. Then he went away. After a while they heard the door close. But there was no sound from the electric hansom, and Mortimer rose and walked to the window.

"He's gone," he said.

XIII

THE heat, which had been severe in June, driving the last fashionable loiterer into the country, continued fiercely throughout July. August was stifling; the chestnut leaves in the parks curled up and grew brittle; the elms were blotched; brown stretches scarred the lawns; the blazing color of the geranium beds seemed to intensify the heat like a bed of living coals.

Nobody who was anybody remained in town—except some wealthy business men and their million-odd employees; but the million, being nobodies, didn't count.

The house of Mrs. Mortimer was closed and boarded up; the Caithness mansion was closed; the Ferralls', the Bonnesdels', the Pages', the Shannons', Mrs. Vendenning's, all were sealed up like vaults. A caretaker apparently guarded Major Belwether's house, peeping out at intervals from behind the basement windows. As for Plank's great pile of masonry, edging the outer Hundreds in the north, several lighted windows were to be seen in it at night, and a big yellow and black touring-car whizzed downtown from its bronze gateway every morning with perfect regularity.

For there was a fight on that had steadily grown hotter with the weather, and Plank had little time to concern himself with the temperature or to mop his red features over the weather bureau report. Harrington and Quarrier were after him, horse, foot and dragoons; Harrington had even taken a house at Seabright in order to be near in person; and Quarrier's move from Long Island to Shotover House was not so flippant as it might appear, for he had his private car there and a locomotive at Black Fells Crossing station, and he was within striking distance of Rochester, Utica, Syracuse and Albany. Which was what Harrington thought necessary.

The vast unseen machinery set in motion by Harrington and Quarrier had begun to grind in May; and, at the first audible rumble, the aspect of things financial in the country changed. A few industrials began to rocket, nobody knew why; but the market's first tremor left it baggy and spineless, and the reaction, already overdue, became a sodden and soggy slump. Nobody knew why.

The noise of the fray in the papers, which had first excited, then stunned, the outside public, continued in a delirium of rumor, report, forecast, and summing up at the week's end.

Scare-heads, involving everybody and everything, from the district-attorney to Plank's office boy, succeeded one another. Plank's name headed column after column. Already becoming familiar in the society and financial sections, it began to appear in neighboring paragraphs. Who was Plank? And the papers told people with more or less inaccuracy, humor or sarcasm. What was he trying to do? The papers tried to tell that, too, making a pretty close guess, with comments good-natured or ill-natured according to circumstances over which somebody ought to have some control. What was Harrington trying to do to Plank – if he was trying to do anything? They told that pretty clearly. What was Quarrier going to do to Plank? That, also, they explained in lively detail. A few clergymen who stuck to their churches began to volunteer pulpit opinions concerning the ethics of the battle. A minister who was generally supposed to make an unmitigated nuisance of himself in politics dealt Plank an unexpected blow by saying that he was a "hero." Some papers called him "Hero" Plank for a while, but soon tired of it or forgot it under the stress of the increasing heat.

Besides, Plank scarcely noticed what the press said of him. He was too busy; his days were full days, brimming over deep into the night. Brokers, lawyers, sycophants, tipsters, treacherous ex-employees of Quarrier, detectives, up-State petty officials, lobbyists from Albany, newspaper men, men from Wall Street, Broad Street, Mulberry Street, Forty-second Street—all these he saw in units, relays, regiments—either at his offices or after dinner—and sometimes after midnight in his own house. And these were only a few, picked from the interested or disinterested thousands who besieged him with advice, importunity, threats, and attempted blackmail. And he handled them all in turn, stolidly but with decision. His obstinate under lip protruded further and further with rare recessions; his heavy head was like the lowered head of a bull. Undaunted, inexorable, slow to the verge of stupidity at times, at times swift as a startled tiger, this new, amazing personality, steadily developing, looming higher, heavier, athwart the financial horizon – in stature holding his own among giants, then growing, gradually, inch by inch—dominated his surrounding level sky-line.

The youth in him was the tragedy to the old; the sudden silence of the man the danger to the secretive. Harrington was already an old man; Quarrier's own weapon had always been secrecy; but the silence of Plank confused him, for he had never learned to parry well another's use of his own weapon. The left-handed swordsman dreads to cross with a man who fights with the left hand. And Harrington, hoary, seamed, scarred, maimed in onslaughts of long-forgotten battles, looked long and hard upon this wraith of his own dead youth which now rose towering to confront him, menacing him with the armed point of the same shield behind which he himself had so long found shelter—the Law!

The closing of the courts enforced armed truces along certain lines of Plank's battle-front; the adjournment of the Legislature emptied Albany. Once it was rumored that Plank had passed an entire morning with the Governor of the greatest State in the Union and that the conference was to be repeated. A swarm of newspaper men settled about the Governor's summer cottage at Saratoga, but they learned nothing, nor could they find a trace of Plank's tracks in the trodden trails of the great Spa.

Besides, the racing had begun; Desmond, Burbank, Sneed, and others of the gilded guild had opened new clubhouses; the wretched, half-starved natives in the surrounding hills were violating the game-laws to distend the paunches of the overfed with five-inch troutlings and grouse and woodcock slaughtered out of season; so there was plenty of copy for newspaper men without the daily speculative paragraphs devoted to the doings of Beverly Plank. Some scandal, too—but newspapers never touch that; and, after all, it was nobody's affair that Leroy Mortimer drove a large yellow-and-black French touring-car, new model, all over Saratoga County. Perhaps the similarity of machines gave rise to the rumor of Plank's presence; perhaps not, because the car was often driven by a tall, slender girl with dark eyes and hair; and nobody ever saw that sort of pretty woman in Plank's motor, or saw Leroy Mortimer for many days without a companion of that species.

Mortimer's health was excellent. The races had not proved remunerative, however, and his new motor-car was horribly expensive. And he began to be seriously afraid that by the end of August he would be obliged to apply to Quarrier once more for some slight token of that gentleman's good will.

Plank, it was known, had opened his great house at Black Fells. His servants, gamekeepers, were there; his stables, kennels, greenhouses, model stock-farm—all had been put in immaculate condition pending the advent of the master. But Plank had not appeared; his new sea-going steam yacht still lay in the East River, and, at rare intervals, a significant glimmer of bunting disclosed the owner's presence aboard for an hour or two. That was all, however; and the cliff-watchers at Shotover House and the Fells looked seaward in vain for the big Siwanoa, as yacht after yacht, heralded by the smudge on the horizon, turned from a gray speck to a white one, and crept in from the sea to anchor.

The Ferralls were at Shotover with their first installment of guests. Sylvia was there, Quarrier expected—because Kemp Ferrall's break with him was not a social one, and Grace's real affection for Sylvia blinded neither her nor her husband to the material and social importance of the intimacy. Siward was not invited; neither had an invitation to him been even discussed in view of what Grace was aware of, and what everybody knew concerning the implacable relations existing between him and Howard Quarrier.

Bridge, yachting and motoring were the August sports; the shooting set had not yet arrived, of course; in fact, there was still another relay expected before the season opened and brought the shooting coterie for the first two weeks. But Sylvia was expected to last through and hold over with a brief interlude for a week-end at Lenox. So was Quarrier; and Grace, always animated by a lively but harmless malice, hoped to Heaven that Plank might arrive before Quarrier left, because she adored the tension of situations, and was delightedly persuaded that Plank was more than able to hold his own with her irritating cousin.

"Oh, to see them together in a small room!" she sighed ecstatically in Sylvia's ear: "I'd certainly poke them up if

(Continued on Page 23)

Prone to Pace the Cliffs, Apparently Content with the Thunderous Calm of Sea and Sky

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GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, EDITOR

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Poor Richard Junior's Philosophy

¶ It's a wise advertising spirit that knows its best medium.

¶ Love eats little. Therefore, love much and smash the trusts.

¶ It is easy to give a confidence, but it is impossible to buy it back.

¶ Pie is a shorter word than indigestion, but it gets there just the same.

¶ Charity begins at home—and it's one thing the neighbors never borrow.

¶ Gossip is the heedless chauffeur who never stops to consider the injured.

¶ The man with the rake-off is the one who sneers at the man with the muck-rake.

¶ There are more things in tin cans, Horatio, than are dreamt of in thy philosophy.

¶ A few women in Congress might help the country and they couldn't hurt Congress.

¶ We all admire the gifted conversationalist and prefer to sit next to the good talker.

¶ The man who halted on third base to congratulate himself failed to make a home run.

¶ Sarcasm is a bankrupt nobleman who endows an American heiress with all his worldly goods.

All Work and No Play

THE short-story contest with thousand-dollar prizes has been run into the ground. It is doubtful whether such a contest ever brought forth a really great story, or one that would never have seen the light of day except for the bait of the big prize offered. There is a large, steady market for good stories, and it is easy enough to break into the market if the author can furnish the right kind of goods. With the theatre it is different. Actors and managers are supposed to lie awake nights in their anxiety to discover new plays, but the young playwright seems to find a good deal of trouble in attracting the attention of the anxious actor or manager.

The market for plays is not an easy one to break into. For this reason, a play contest—such as the New Theatre organization of Chicago has announced—may produce some interesting results. The New Theatre itself is a modest attempt to improve the conditions of theatrical production by organizing a stock company to give, during a season of thirty weeks, fifteen plays that shall be worth seeing. They have a guarantee fund, an advance subscription sale of tickets, and a board of trustees composed of gentlemen interested in the theatre. It is organized along the lines of the famous Thomas Orchestra Association that has given Chicago one of the two or three best orchestras in the world and housed it in its own hall.

The play contest is for the benefit of the young American dramatist. The New Theatre wants only American plays of modern life, and acting plays. The prize will be an adequate production, and if successful a two-weeks' run with the usual royalties, the rights to remain with the author. It is not a huge prize compared with the five-thousand-dollar-story contest prize, but it should be enough. The budding dramatist is after production: if he can get his work before the public suitably he is confident that some other power will see its opportunity and seize it. All the budding dramatist wants is publicity. It is well to limit the contest to plays of American life. That is what the new dramatist should be writing about. The regular theatres offer enough of the imported British society play or French adaptations. The home field has hardly been touched, and, when the public finds that good plays can be written about the life they know, there will probably be less chance for the present sort of rot. If the New Theatre contest brings out one strong American play it will be a great success.

What's the News?

EVERYBODY has a grievance against the newspapers. Dog days aggravate many grievances. Some object to this characteristic, some to that. But we believe the great mass of objection arises subconsciously from the fact that the papers are dull. Consider your least-hated daily. There is the inevitable family jar from Pittsburg. Does it really interest you? There is the full page of sporting events, which may be interesting; but only an expert can understand the jargon in which it is written. There is the "society" department—the leading items, concerning the "smart set," gathered at considerable pains and expense, while the paragraphs, concerning the more numerous stupid set, are sent in, or brought personally to the office, by the ladies whose important departures for the seaside or returns thence are thus certified to a weary world.

The alleged function of a newspaper is to print the news. What is the news? Why, whatever is in the papers, of course. It is made news by the simple fact that the papers print it. Every editor will tell you, with pride, that his paper daily throws away as much matter as it publishes. Our wonder why it doesn't try throwing away what it prints and printing what it throws away is provoked by no spirit of levity, but by an earnest consideration of the possibility of improving one of our greatest institutions.

In every large city there are newspapers that nobody reads—or nobody worth mentioning. These are exactly the papers that most religiously "print the news"—that is, the happenings which a consensus of newspaper judgment has approved as the staples of the trade, and which, accordingly, are furnished by the Associated Press and local news bureaus. Other papers have a great measure of popularity. These are the ones that print something besides the staple news. The conclusion is inevitable. Much of the so-called news is a bore and an affliction. Everybody has a grievance against the newspapers, because even the best of them print so much of it.

Uncle Sam Borrows

THE first offering of Panama Canal bonds—$30,000,000 in amount—brought a premium of about three and a half per cent. The old two per cents. have held at a premium of three to four per cent. for a long time, and, unless a great business depression intervenes, there is no doubt that the remainder of the canal issue, whatever the amount may be, can be sold at a premium.

Say we expend two hundred millions in digging the canal. The fixed charge devolving upon the people of the United States will be four millions a year, or less than three per cent. of the annual pension-roll—which nobody minds. It is an interesting suggestion of the power of a great Government—or of our Government, for no other could match this feat in borrowing. British Government bonds, bearing two and a half per cent. interest, sell at a discount of about twelve per cent. The canal bonds are available as a basis for national bank circulation on the same terms as the old twos—the tax on such circulation being only one-half of one per cent. a year. Experts expect that the canal issue, therefore, will result in an important expansion of national bank circulation, hence of the total stock of money in the country. Thanks largely to the old two per cents., national bank notes in circulation increased in the sum of $69,000,000 in the fiscal year ending July 1. Most persons are familiar with the axiom that prosperity begins with spending money and going in debt. Unfortunately only a few of us are able to adjust the formula successfully to our petty individual cases.

An Exploded Theory

THE purpose of the War Department to establish a small powder factory of its own is interesting out of proportion to the size of the plant. We used to hear a great deal more than we do now about the efficiency of private as compared with Government management. It was said many times that a private corporation could conduct the postal business of the country more economically than the Government did. Probably that statement, so far as it goes, is still true. But nobody who has intelligently studied contemporaneous trust history can really doubt that, if the postal business were in the hands of a typical private corporation, the public would get a worse service at a higher cost—not because the management would be incompetent, but because it would be greedy. The powder trust is believed to be admirably efficient. But that does not mean cheap powder; it means big profits.

The secret is now fairly out. All those multi-millionaires of so new growth did not get their money from fairy godmothers. They sequestrated it, in one way or another, out of the wealth of the country. Mr. Carnegie's three or four hundred millions were contributed by the consumers of steel. The Standard Oil Company has never undergone the stock-watering process which is so common an incident of trust-making; hence affords a clearer illustration of the profits derivable from practical monopoly of a staple article. The last five years it has paid its stockholders dividends to the amount of two hundred and nineteen million dollars, or two and a fifth times the amount of its capital stock. Considerable extravagance might be introduced into the management, and still give consumers their kerosene and axle grease cheaper. There are, of course, certain exceptions. But most of the trusts are inspired by a get-rich-quick motive. So long as they are thus inspired and have a free rein, their efficiency, whatever its degree, will do consumers no good. The War Department will evidently be much disappointed if its little powder plant doesn't help to blow up what remains of the notion that mere managerial efficiency tells the whole story

The Machine's Handicap

FORMER Governor Yates, of Illinois, who now desires to represent that Commonwealth in the upper house of Congress, is telling his audiences that Senators Cullom and Hopkins and Speaker Cannon took him up into a high hotel room, where he was offered the post of ambassador to Mexico if he would deliver his convention delegates at a critical juncture. He thinks this illustrates the difficulties which beset his path in seeking a Senatorship in opposition to the wishes of the gentlemen who control the Federal jobs in his State. But as Mr. Yates is a politician of much skill and experience, and as he adds that he has repeated the story from the platform in one hundred and two counties, it seems to us to illustrate something else even more forcibly—to wit, that it is becoming increasingly difficult for a political machine, with whatever power and sagacity it may be operated, to overcome the handicap of being a machine. The adroit ex-Governor evidently judges that his best card consists in showing that he is opposed by a powerful machine; and he shrewdly calculates that the better he succeeds in impressing his audiences with an idea of the potency of the machine, the better chance he will stand of triumphing over it.

The case is typical of the times. The mightier the machine, the weaker it is. Its liability to overthrow is exactly in proportion to the energy that has been expended in constructing it. Before the ides of November we shall see many gentlemen violently seeking to detach themselves—at least until the campaign is over—from the machines which they have toilfully created, and probably eagerly pointing out for their own vindication such evidences as they can discover of defects in their mechanical efficiency—as where a collectorship or postmastership got away from them.

The Great Dividend

THIS is the time of year when the stock-ticker lies limp in the broker's office, and the farmer has the floor. It is of vastly more importance to know whether it is good "growing weather" than whether the Attorney-General has brought a new suit against the Standard Oil, or Mr. Cassatt has taken the steamer for home, or Mr. Gates is optimistic about his country. All over the land, from rocky Maine to sunny California, something is going on day and night that is of first-rate consequence to every one of eighty millions of human beings: water is trickling down the hillsides, moistening the soil; green stalks of corn are swelling with juice; grass is waist-high; wheat is growing golden under the hot rays of the sun. The earth is hard at work producing its annual dividend, and on its increase depends pretty much everything else—the mills, the railroads, the stores—the dinner-pail and the automobile for next year.

We talk a lot about trusts, and captains of industry, about the Senate and the Supreme Court; but Mother Nature really does the business. Each year she gives the country several billions, more or less, of clear, unmortgaged profits, with which Wall Street may play its game of paper securities and the factories may open their doors for business.

It is good to walk over the fields in the long midsummer days and know that, graft or no graft, with or without Mr. Roosevelt's permission, and no matter what we may think of Mr. Rockefeller, the corn continues to ripen and the apples are turning red in the orchard. It may be a wicked world where the few take all the jack-pots; but the earth is a good mistress and she repays at usurious rates whatever is put into her.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Human Documents in the Case of the New Slavery

By Mrs. JOHN VAN VORST

A SHORT journey in the cars from Portland, Maine, to Dover, New Hampshire, carries one across a State border-line, and therewith into a realm new as regards the legal aspect of the cotton-mill industry.

Dover, though mild and conservative in appearance, boasts a population of fifteen thousand souls, two-fifths of whom are foreigners from that part of Europe which the good New Englander mentions with a downward curve of the lips. There are among them both French and Swedes, to be sure, but these nationalities represent already a laboring aristocracy which looks down upon the other classes formed of Armenians, Portuguese, Greeks, Poles, Russians and other Slavs.

It was with some hesitation that the agent of one of the larger mills consented to my visiting the vast precincts of his industrial domain. He accompanied me "upstairs and downstairs."

"I believe," said this agent, who is a disciple of Tolstoi—"I believe in respecting the law. I enforce the spirit by the letter. My overseers understand that I only want suitable help. It would not greatly affect us if they took all our smallest hands. When the truant officer came in, about six weeks after vacation was over, he found only one boy who could not show his certificate on request, and that boy had his at home."

As I walked on through the upper rooms where the old "mule spinners" were installed, I noticed a number of very little boys at work. These "mule spinners," which produce an extremely fine and perfect thread, are composed of so complicated a machinery that they must be tended not by a child, but by a man. For the merely mechanical attention to that part of the moving frame which is close to the ground, however, the "little hands" are indispensable.

Pointing to one of the tiny aids, not more, evidently, than twelve years old, I questioned the Tolstoian agent.

"Oh," he responded with a somewhat indifferent air, "the children twelve and thirteen years old come in at three o'clock, as soon as school is over, to help their parents."

"But this is a tacit breaking of the law?" I asked.

The agent shrugged his shoulders, as though there were an inward conflict between conscience and expediency.

"I tried to stop this 'helping system,'" he said, "but the parents protested. After all, the children are better off here than they would be in the streets of a town like Dover."

New Hampshire permits children to work in the factories at the age of twelve during the vacations of the public schools. During the full school session, the boys and girls, up to fourteen years, must follow the instruction given, and those who cannot read and write must, until sixteen years of age, go to the school or attend the night-classes.

One of the militant members of the Federation of Women's Clubs, speaking of the conditions in New Hampshire, expressed herself to me as follows:

"As far as I can ascertain there are children under age employed at the mills in many towns. When we tried to urge an investigation we were begged by the authorities not to 'stir up' the matter. As conditions are not very bad in New Hampshire," she concluded in a melancholy way, "the men and women of our State are willing to 'let things drift.'"

There is, to be sure, no factory inspection in the State of New Hampshire, and, as has been often remarked, laws have no real value except through their enforcement.

At Nashua the "herd" of foreigners is more dense even than in Dover, more villainous, more swarming, more rapacious, more heedless of the laws in a country whose patriotism for them echoes only to the ring of a silver dollar.

The two thousand hands of one manufacturing establishment in Nashua are almost all foreign. I questioned many of the children in the spinning-room. Those who were able to speak English gave their ages as fourteen. Those who could not speak English were, without exception, according to their own verdict, over sixteen years old; though their diminutive size, their immaturity, declared them, to the most casual observer, as not above twelve or thirteen years of age. As soon as I spoke to them upon this delicate subject their expression of intensity changed to one of merriment—they rushed to tell their comrades of their adroitness in deceiving a stranger, and, as I passed, I left behind me a trail of hilarity.

One girl who spoke only French had been ten years in the mills. Her voice was gone, her eyes were dulled, she looked a thousand years old, and there was something gruesome in the way she spat upon the ground, grinning the while, as she twisted a broken thread between her fingers, joining it to the whirling bobbin which she had tended for a decade.

At the office the brisk young American clerks had but one verdict to give regarding the social disadvantages of the laborer from Southern Europe: "He is like an animal. He herds with his compatriots into quarters which his habitation renders so filthy that, afterward, no American is willing to take up his abode there."

She Looked a Thousand Years Old

At the City Hall, where I talked for a time with the "young lady assistant," I learned to what an extent the prejudice against the foreigner has become ferocious in towns which, like Nashua, boast truly old and venerable inhabitants—and to what extent, also, this prejudice affects the very destinies of America.

"Why," the young lady assistant protested, "these foreigners have ten and eleven children in a family! They're just like animals, and they're responsible for all the poverty here. It seems as if they had no sense whatever, having such families."

Then, after a moment's reflection, in which it seemed she were summoning courage for a denunciation almost antipatriotic, she added:

"They don't have *my* approval if they do have President Roosevelt's. At our charity societies we are perfectly disgusted with them!"

There is something appalling in the statistics of certain of the cotton mills in Manchester: the floor space of these factories covers one hundred and twenty-five acres; the spindles that twist, in their revolutions, thread for a world of cotton garments, number six hundred thousand; the total number of yards of cloth woven, not in a century, but in a week, amounts to 4,921,000; the pay-roll dispenses $108,000 hard-earned dollars, and the hands who receive them form a body of 13,704 persons. In other words, these mills are the largest in the world.

Almost one-half of the fifty-six thousand Manchester inhabitants are foreigners. They are monopolizing everything—so the legend goes—because of their large families.

"Why," said the little school-teacher to me, "we've so many foreigners that they keep our children back. The Americans," she added, with an air of superiority, "many of them, have no children. The educated prefer quality to quantity. They'd rather have two and give them a good education, and they'd rather have none than give them no education at all! Lots of the American hands when they marry go right on working. They have no home and no children; they just board around."

It was the clerk at the hotel who gave me the word of introduction necessary for opening the doors of the larger mills, and a young office-boy accompanied me on my round through one factory. He was of the energetic type we designate as "thoroughly American," self-respecting, ambitious, proud, neat, smart, alert and resolute.

"There's lots of children here under age," he volunteered, "but so long as the truant officer doesn't get after them they're all right."

And presently, as we passed by a mule spinning-frame which had two tiny boys in attendance, my companion proffered:

"You wouldn't think that little fellow was fourteen, would you?"

"No," I responded.

"Well, he says he is, but he isn't—none of them are. They're all foreigners. Lots of 'em can't even read and write their own names. You see," he explained, "we've got to have the work done and the Americans won't do it—it's too dirty for them—so we take in foreigners."

"And how do they get in? They must have a certificate verifying their age. How can they obtain this?"

"Well," my informant responded, "the parents swear falsely about their children's ages, and, besides that, they move around from one ward to another, change their names, and use the new certificate of the older children for those too young to get a certificate of their own."

So light and airy a sense of legal obligations seems hardly credible, yet such are the facts. A family takes out certificates in one part of the town under the name of Blanche. The following year they move into another quarter, install themselves under the name of White, and the younger children thus, as little Whites, provide themselves with the certificates of the older brothers who are

"Rosie, You Have Been and Scrubbed the Floors Again"

already serving in the army of laborers under the appellation of Blanche.

It is in the pursuit of such miscreants that the truant officers can alone act effectually in a State where there is no official factory inspector. The work done by the present Superintendent of Schools at Manchester is irreproachable. All that conscientious and persistent endeavor can contribute to reform is here being accomplished by those who enforce with rigid precision the New Hampshire school-laws. But, alas, there is a faith so implicit placed in "parents and guardians" that their oath, made in no matter what spirit of rapacity, is accepted without question, and thus it happens that one finds in the mills a goodly number of children whose "parents swear they're fourteen when they're only twelve."

Having obtained at the schools in Manchester a list of "truants," I set out upon an expedition into the poorer quarters of this thriving industrial town.

The prodigious mills are massed together in a block which sways to the rhythm of the huge and forceful machines within. A broad and busy avenue—framed with double rows of tempting stores whose vast plate windows reflect the trolley cars that flash right and left—traverses Manchester from west to east. Yet out of this thoroughfare so animated a step carries one into the poorer quarters.

There is one expression used by the dilettantes of charity as by the most democratic of philanthropists: they say when setting out upon a round among the poor: "We are going *down* to the slums." This *down* (inasmuch as, from a geographical point of view, it does not always mean a direction) implies a certain worldly concession, a moral condescension, instinctive, and, therefore, more poignant, which those who are not strictly of the "slums" feel for that part of the world whither the very poor have been relegated.

As a matter of fact, from a spiritual point of view—given the lesson we learn there of self-abnegation and Christian disinterested devotion, of charity and of love—we might well say, in speaking of our visits to the poor, that they take us not down but *up* to the slums.

The Terrible Truants

IT WAS almost six o'clock when I rapped at the Landry's door. Rose, they had told me at the school, and Josie, her older sister, were both of them truants. This somewhat romantic word invoked visions of other runaway children whose lives had begun with escapades and continued in adventures of all kinds, but the dismal entrance of the Landry's tenement dulled at once whatever rose-color had momentarily enveloped the images of these two fugitives.

A light step sounded in response to my tap at the door, which was thrown open by a child on whose little face was a smile of greeting as she welcomed me without question. In the hospitable tone of the very poor, to whom the stranger is an object of especial courtesy, she bade me be seated and wait until her mother came in.

"But it was you I came to see," I explained. "You are Rose Landry, aren't you?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She had placed one hand on either hip and stood with her arms thus akimbo, a light cotton jacket hanging loose from her narrow little shoulders, her eyes all eagerness, and her thin, frail body bent forward with the intensity of the working woman, weary herself, alert for others.

"You are eleven years old, aren't you?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Then why aren't you in school?"

She threw out both hands with a pretty gesture, indulgent, despairing, and then she laughed:

"Why, I have all the housekeeping to do, and mamma's dinner to carry, and besides," she added, "I have these two to take care of!"

"These two" were a boy of nine and a girl of six who sat demurely in the corner looking at a picture-book. As I turned to speak to them there was a sound from the direction of the kitchen which announced that something on the fire needed attention. Rose in an instant quieted the simmering disturbance on the stove and, returning, explained:

"I love school better than anything, but I must help mamma. I'm up, you see, every morning at half-past four. I've got my floors to scrub and the breakfast to cook. Then I go to market, and I have to get mamma's dinner ready and take it to the factory. It's getting mamma's dinner," she added, "that bothers me from going to school."

Then, perhaps, something in my expression offended her, for she protested quickly, a flash of loyalty in her dark, bright eyes:

"I don't have to scrub my floors and do quite all these things; mamma don't want me to, but I do it to advance her at the mill. When she comes home at night I don't want her to have a thing to do."

The tenement was shining with cleanliness. On the table, which was spread for supper, a red cloth reflected gayly the light from a neatly-trimmed lamp. There was order and cheer in all that this little housekeeper had touched.

Long before I heard a sound on the stairs, Rose—alternating moments of conversation with flights into the kitchen for the preparation of supper—sounded the signal of those accustomed to waiting for a returning footstep at the close of the day.

"Hark!" she cried; "there's Josie!"

And presently the door opened and the second of the truants, aged thirteen, came in from a ten-hour day's work at a shoe-shop. She, too, was "doing it to advance mamma," and the burden she carried, too heavy for so young shoulders, had put something prematurely resigned into the dignity of her bearing. When school was spoken of—and, indeed, it seemed almost inappropriate to propose classes to one for whom life had been itself so full a lesson—Josie smiled. With a certain pride she opened a desk that stood at one side of the room, and took from it a handful of copybooks in which her clear, round handwriting showed the application of a faithful pupil.

"I'd love to have graduated," she said. "I had only one more year."

Again the warning note of Rose, the vigilant, sounded. This time there was a ring of tenderness in her voice, as she cried, lifting up her little hand:

"Hark! There's mamma!"

The step that approached slowly by the steep tenement stairway was heavy with fatigue, and the greeting Mrs. Landry gave, as she pushed open the door, was listless.

"Rosie," she said, turning to the little housekeeper, "you've been and scrubbed those floors again!"

But Rosie's gay, ringing laugh defied the pity implied in these few words of affectionate reproach. The mother laid aside her shawl, put in its place the dinner-pail. She moved as one moves who has no real hope in life to prompt new energy and impulse. When I questioned her she was reticent, admitting only that her husband was living somewhere in New Hampshire—how she did not know, for he had given her no news of himself since deserting her.

The two youngest children had slid down from their seat in the corner and stood close to the mother, rubbing against her shyly as they listened, without understanding, to what she said.

Though she had been gone from the house since five in the morning Mrs. Landry did not sit down. She was inspecting me; inwardly she had a misapprehension that I had come from some charitable or philanthropic society, and the idea to her of accepting help, other than such aid as one friend gives another, was repellent. It was only after I had reassured her of my official interest that she relaxed, admitting slowly in her hoarse, broken voice:

"It's been a pretty hard pull." Then she added: "I don't carry my cross; I drag it. But I have the children"—her hand rested on the head of the little one by her side—"and"—she finished the sentence to herself—"I'm happy, because I believe in God."

The following day I visited Josie at the shoe-shop. Had I been myself the truant officer I would, I am sure, have been tempted in this case to make an exception in the law's enforcement. Had Josie been taken from factory, had Rose been put back into school, the Landry family would have been broken up. An asylum would have replaced home for the two younger children, and the evil done them and the mother would perhaps have been greater than was the premature physical fatigue provoked by the incessant effort to triumph over misfortune, and the fight for an ideal dearer than welfare to those who do not live by bread alone.

Yet how make exceptions to the law? How alter the letter without entailing license for the oppressor?

When Wages Wane

EVEN with the clearing of the children from the spinning-rooms, the wages of the laborers have not, as it might be expected, augmented; on the contrary, they have, for twenty years, diminished steadily. The recent long and terrible Fall River strikes sufficiently attest to the gradual exasperation of the cotton-mill hand who has been "cut down," as he puts it, to "starvation rates." And, if we believe the verdict of the expert, this "cutting down" has been an economic necessity. Referring to the outcome of the Fall River strikes, the New York Times says in an editorial:

"If the forty-one corporations had been required to disburse $1,500,000 more wages annually, irrespective of their profits, it is hardly too much to say that the prospect of the continuance of the industry would have been imperilled. . . . The annual reports and meetings are pitiful reading for anybody interested in the industry."

What does it all mean then?

That reform is inconsistent with prosperity?

That vexatious labor-laws actually do hamper the manufacturer?

Before deciding thus peremptorily against the practicability of enforcing, throughout other States, such laws as are observed strictly in Massachusetts, there are a number of things to be considered.

In the first place, as a nation, we export large quantities of raw cotton, and import quantities of manufactured prints and ginghams. These manufactured cotton goods which we import are as even the most casual "shopper" has observed—four and five times more expensive to buy, and they are also infinitely finer than our own cotton cloths.

We are creating a scarcity in the raw material and importing the manufactured article! Think what a competition results!

A second observation to be made is this. Within five years the Southern States have increased their consumption of cotton from 656,440 bales to 4,278,980 bales. The Northern mills have increased theirs absolutely by 16,905. The North has still 15,865,790 spindles as against 8,211,734 in the South, but this disproportion cannot long continue. Already the spinning-rooms in the Southern mills look like crowded playrooms for children by comparison with the Fall River factories.

Now, the older the hands the more intelligent and expert they presumably are. Why, therefore, should not the Northern manufacturer take advantage of a necessity which the law has forced upon him? And, since the South has become, in the matter of coarse cotton cloths, so lively a competitor with the North, why should not the North, in turn, with her equipment of "hands over fourteen," compete against Europe and replace, by home production, the entire category of imported goods? Such a move would harmonize with the enforcement of the child-labor laws in the North.

The Root of the Evil

IN THE South the problem is very different. There shortage in the labor supply seems to be at the root of the difficulties. As the retired agent put it: "No one would *want* to use children, but *we can't get the big help.*"

For the moment it would seem that, in the North, it is quality of labor, and in the South quantity, that is required in order, from a commercial point of view, to make practical the enforcement of proper legislation.

The opinion of those competent to judge is in favor of encouraging at once the right sort of immigration toward the Southern mills.

Now, although there will be an immense step in the right direction the day that labor-laws are passed limiting in every State the age at which children can work, the chances are that these laws, as in Alabama, will remain a "dead letter" until the question of shortage in labor supply is settled, until there are factory inspectors appointed, and until there are compulsory school-laws made and truant officers named rigorously to execute them.

Now, although in the South, for the time being at least, scientific philanthropy can, and necessarily must, supplement the work of legal reform in the North, yet in Maine and New Hampshire there is no reason why the laws, in their strictest forms, should not be enforced. There is plenty of school room and there are truant officers to look after the children who escape from lessons to go to the mills.

All sorts of arguments are put forth by the ignorant and the rapacious regarding the chance evils of child-labor. "If the children weren't in the factory they would be in the streets!" say some. "Work doesn't hurt little children," say others. "The spinners are better off than the newsboys."

Yet the truth is always more eloquent than anything that can be said against it. With regard to the accumulation of fatigue which assails even the strongest "hands" engaged in mill work, a few statistics taken from the Revue Scientifique are exceedingly to the point.

An important member of the Faculty of Medicine of Montpelier has compiled the following observations regarding the time of day in which the greatest number of accidents occur in the factories. Out of 5110 accidents recorded, the order of progression was as follows:

110	at	6 A. M.	120	at	1 P. M.
235	"	7 "	420	"	2 "
375	"	8 "	530	"	3 "
420	"	9 "	740	"	4 "
600	"	10 "	750	"	5 "
405	"	11 "	350	"	6 "
55	"	12 "			

There is a slight diminution at twelve and at six o'clock, owing to the fact that the machinery slackens at these hours, and that many hands "lay off" or "clean up" for fifteen to twenty minutes before the noon and night whistles blow.

As for the days of the week, the lesson they import is still more striking. According to the Scientific Review for September, 1904, and October, 1905, the accidents have occurred in the following proportion as the week goes on:

307 on Monday.
385 " Tuesday.
410 " Wednesday.
425 " Thursday.
420 " Friday.
435 " Saturday.

What could be more convincing than the testimony of such figures as the above?

We must lift this burden of fatigue from frail young shoulders if we would see the child of to-day grow into the man, the woman, the parent of to-morrow.

GETTING ON IN THE WORLD

STEPS AND MISSTEPS ON THE ROAD TO FORTUNE

"Registered Out"

THE proprietor of a large retail business in a small city was rebuilding and enlarging his establishment.

He had concluded to extend the quarters of his grocery department, equip it with convenient fixtures, and hire a qualified department manager.

With the matter of fixtures principally in mind, and with one eye open for a competent manager, he visited the leading groceries of a larger city. At one place he was met by a clean-cut young man, who answered his inquiry concisely:

"No, sir, the proprietor is not in. I am his assistant; perhaps I can serve you."

The merchant was at once pleased and impressed with the young man's appearance and explained to him that his only business was to secure ideas in regard to fixtures for use in his store in another city.

"I shall be glad to show you what we have, if you will take the time. If my work calls me you will, of course, excuse me."

The merchant followed where he led, mentally noting that the young man's manners were absolutely perfect. Tea and coffee canisters were opened and closed, fruit and vegetable bins inspected, and the merits of the roll-top refrigerator and the computing scales were explained in detail by the careful young man.

A complaining customer had had attention, a stock-boy had been reprimanded, and a driver's report had in turn been inspected during the tour of the store. The merchant witnessed each transaction and noted courtesy, thoughtfulness, and, he thought, a certain measure of executive ability.

The trend of the merchant's thoughts had somehow turned from fixtures to manager, and he reflected, "This is the man I want, I am sure. I must sound him and see if I can get him."

When the cold-storage plant had been inspected, the young man noted that the noon hour had approached, and said—politely still:

"It is now time for my luncheon and I must ask you to excuse me. I shall be glad to see you in the store this afternoon."

The merchant lingered near the door and saw the young man get his hat, register his departure at the time-clock, and start to leave. As he passed a desk, the telephone attendant called him.

"Mr. Barnlee, call 2-6-5-4."

"Sorry, I've registered out," was his reply.

"But, Mr. Barnlee, it's a customer. She has called twice, and she said it was important."

"So's my luncheon. Can't talk to her on my own time. She'll have to wait till I get back"—and the young man was gone.

The merchant left, too, and did not return in the afternoon. —*W. A. D.*

Breaking In

A. WAS a surveyor and at twenty-two joined the force of B., who was chief engineer of the Western lines of the great X-Y Railway System. A. at first gained valuable experience in the field, then was placed in the office at headquarters as draftsman. When B. discovered that A. was a good draftsman and accurate mathematician, he refused to send him out, and kept him in the office, where A. knew there was small chance for promotion.

A branch line had been surveyed across the mountains; it was called the Selkirk extension, and A. had made the drawings. One day B. came to him and said:

"You take sufficient men, go out to Selkirk Mountain section and verify the profiles."

A. performed the work without a hitch, but while at Mount Selkirk had made a discovery. B. was a haughty man and A. hesitated to mention the matter. But, on making his report, he gathered his courage and said:

"I would like to offer a suggestion concerning the grade around Mount Selkirk."

B. nodded sternly, and A. proceeded: "The grade there is steep and two miles of track are exposed to snowslides. Why not tunnel the mountain and avoid a troublesome grade?"

B. glared at the young man in silence. The next day A. received an envelope and his discharge. He promptly found work with a bridge company, but could not forget Selkirk Mountain. A month later he learned that B. had been transferred to the Eastern lines. When, the same week, the general manager of the X-Y arrived, A. went to headquarters and asked for an audience with the great man. He made two efforts and failed: the manager was busy. Then A. penned a line on his card and sent it in. The line read: "I have a plan whereby the X-Y can save a million dollars." He was admitted, and the manager said:

"Well, who are you? What is it?"

A. lost no time and produced a drawing. "I am no financier, but I am familiar with the survey on the Selkirk extension, and "

"Are you employed by the company?"

"No, sir, but I lost my job because I proposed that a tunnel be driven through Selkirk Mountain. Here are the grades, two miles of useless track to be buried in snow all winter. Now, since Mr. B. has gone, I dared to call your attention to the proposition. I want to work for your company."

The general manager studied the plan intently. Then he looked and keenly observed the young man.

"I want an opportunity," said A. "Give me a trial, and I ask you to give me full charge of the Selkirk extension."

A. was put through a half-hour's strenuous cross-examination, and at its close the manager turned to his desk to write an order. When A. left the office he carried with him the desired appointment, and since has advanced to the office of chief engineer of the X-Y System. —*O. L. F.*

A Dozen Clothespins

A YOUNG clerk, who had concluded the time was ripe for him to leave counter duties and move up in the service of his company, went to the manager with a request that he be allowed to try city soliciting. The manager shook his head and the clerk went back to his desk. A month later he again broached the matter with an intimation that he intended to try soliciting if it had to be with another firm. He was a good clerk—"too good to spoil"—so the manager sat up and took notice. It was policy to pacify him, for John was a first-class counter man, and he wanted to keep him there. Finally he said:

"John, here is a price schedule. I will give you the account of Smith & Jones to work on. When you get an order from them bring it to me."

John did not find that the company had an account with Smith & Jones. He learned the reason the first time he called on their buyer.

"You are a new man, aren't you? I presume your company sent you to me as a joke. If you don't know it, you may as well learn that Smith & Jones have no use for your concern, never have, and never will do any business with you, and you are wasting your time as well as my own by calling. Good-day."

That was the beginning. Other solicitors had encountered the same reception and given Smith & Jones a wide berth. It was an old breach, and in the card system of the sales department Smith & Jones were listed: "Can't do business with them."

But John hadn't any more sense than to keep on calling, and the buyer, being bored and perceiving some humor in the situation, one day referred him to Smith of the firm, who, being interested in young men for business reasons, asked "the persistent little rat" into his private office. In ten minutes he had guessed correctly the motive of John's persistency.

"You want a place as city solicitor, and your manager has turned you loose on us to dampen your ardor. What salary do you get?"

"Fifteen a week," gasped the astonished John.

"What would soliciting pay?"

"Twenty to start."

"Well, tell your house to send us a rush order of one dozen clothespins, C. O. D., and if you don't get your job come back to me. We have some city soliciting to do ourselves."

But John did not come back, except to solicit more business—and to get it.

—*E. D. E.*

"Get the Business"

IN A CERTAIN office building in Chicago there is a room which seems out of place in this beehive of commercial industry. It is furnished like a schoolroom and adjoins the offices of one of the large insurance corporations. At nine o'clock every business morning this room is the scene of an unusual gathering. A dozen or more well-dressed young men and some older ones congregate here for instruction. An elderly man appears punctually at the desk and for a half-hour delivers to them a discourse which for terseness, pointed meaning and genuine inspiration is a model of eloquence. There is no generalization; the manager is talking to his solicitors, and the one and only object in view in this assemblage is to develop the ability to *get business*. These two words are the keynote of every talk, the parting admonition of every session of the class. When the manager has finished his talk he calls two of the solicitors to the front.

"Jones, you may proceed to sell Smith here a bond."

Then begins an argumentative contest the like of which the solicitor seldom equals in real business. As a preliminary, he briefly ingratiates himself into the good graces of his prospective customer. Smith gives him the stony stare; pleads too busy; that he is already loaded with insurance; that he must see his partner; that he prefers another company's proposition; and *ad infinitum*. It is a battle of wits, and the instructor and the remainder of the class watch the contest closely, occasionally breaking in with disconcerting interruptions. At the end, a vote is taken as to whether the solicitor technically sold the bond, and if not, whether he met the situation adequately. Rivalry is intense, and the man who can technically sell a well-posted fellow-solicitor feels almost as much elation as if the deal were a real one. At ten o'clock the class hurries away to the real work of the day. Is it any wonder these men *get business* and work by preference on a commission basis?

—*E. D. E.*

To Prevent Boiler Explosions

BEING an employee of a railroad company, I have been deeply impressed by the number of fatalities arising from the explosion of locomotive boilers, and I have noticed that the majority of such accidents have occurred through the engineer allowing the water to get low in the boiler, so low that the crownsheet becomes white hot. One of two things then happens: either the pressure forces the crownsheet through the stay-bolts that hold it, or the engineer injects cold water into the superheated crownsheet, in either case invariably causing an explosion. The frequence of such explosions has brought me to give the matter much thought, and I have endeavored to figure out some plan by which, as soon as the water sinks to a dangerous level in the boiler, warning may be given the engineer by an automatic alarm. Thus far I have been unable to devise how this can be accomplished, but it is surely a good idea for any one of an inventive turn of mind, for every railroad in the country would equip its engines with such a device if it were possible to get one.

In nearly all cases of explosion the engineer will maintain that his gauge showed a proper level of water in the boiler, but the examining experts can usually establish the cause beyond a doubt from the conclusive evidence of a burned crownsheet. This leads one to believe that the gauge must have failed to reveal the real conditions present in the boiler, that sediment or scale had plugged the connection to the glass and was holding water in sight when the real level in the boiler was below the crownsheet. The intention of my corrective device would be to give warning to the engineer in case of a defective water gauge. —*M. R. R.*

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50 CALLING CARDS $1.00 (INCLUDING ENGRAVED PLATE)

HOSKINS

904-6 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

Business Manager Wanted

THE SHAME OF THE COLLEGES

(Concluded from Page 9)

"I denied the compliment as good-naturedly as I could, and the young man immediately stampeded away toward the railway station.

"'Stop!' I cried. 'Why do you ask me this strange question, and then hurry away thus?'

"'I am a heeler,' replied the young man.

"'A what?' I gasped.

"'A heeler,' he repeated, 'a scout, a reporter for the News. I go among the Holy Pokers of divinity in Dwight Hall in the guise of a sinner come to grace, then I go among the wassail-tossers of profanity at the New Haven House in the guise of a sinner driven to drink. I am all things to all students until I learn their hearts' secrets—then out pops my cloven hoof and a four-line item in the college daily.'

"He seemed a nice young man, in spite of his hard life; so when I told him that I was looking for my son in the Freshman class he took me on my news-value and said that he would lead me over to the Quadrangle and show me some Freshmen. As we were going across the Square hand in hand I saw a very serious-looking student who stood beneath an elm tree and recited Poe's Raven in a loud, clear voice. He was doing the piece so nicely that I did not notice, for a moment, that up in the tree was another student who, as his friend recited, dropped peanuts on his head and chanted: 'Never-r-rmore—coo-coo! Never-r-r-rmore—coo-coo!'

"This seemed to me such a vapid, such a trivial ceremony that it quite enraged me. I told the Heeler that I thought it a shame for Freshmen to be taken into the University so young and frivolous.

"'These are not Freshmen,' said the Heeler indignantly. 'They are Honor Men, both members of the Nut Club. It's a great distinction to belong. I tried to, but I couldn't make it.'

"I was about to protest again when my attention was arrested by a loud clattering of wheels and a discordant cheering and rah-rah-ing. Round the corner there rolled a large omnibus fairly crammed with men in baseball flannels and bright sweaters. They were apparently celebrating a great victory.

"'Do they allow the Freshmen athletes to behave so boisterously on the campus?' I asked the kindly Heeler.

"But he merely answered: 'That's the Faculty baseball team returning from their game with the Phi Beta Kappa. There's Professor Torrey, of the Department of Semitic Languages, and that big chap is Merritt, the University Registrar.'

"I didn't ask if President Hadley was yelling with the rest of the boys in the omnibus, but I have no doubt that he was there.

"Going through the Phelps Gateway into the Quadrangle I saw a great flock of college-boys capering like school-children up and down the turf in the yard, while Mr. Yale's beautiful statue looked on, somewhat disturbed, I thought. Some of the boys were playing a silly game in which they dropped a rubber-ball into holes in the ground, after which they hit each other with it (the ball, not the ground). This game, I am told, is called Nigger Baby. I should think that the police, or President Hadley, or Secretary Taft, or somebody in authority would stop it. Others of these fellows were spinning tops and rolling hoops around the walks, and when I asked one nice-looking boy if they were quite right in their minds he answered:

"'Oh, no, sir, they're Seniors.'

"'If these are Seniors,' I said, 'for Heaven's sake show me some Freshmen!'

"So the young man pointed out some boys sitting in a row in the corner of the yard. They were very quiet and well-behaved, and a good example for their elders, I thought. I approached these boys, and as I got closer I saw that there were thirteen of them in a row. I went up to the Freshman sitting on the end, and was about to inquire about Archibald when he looked up, and lo, it *was* Archibald!

"'Archibald, my boy!' I cried.

"But at my word all thirteen of the boys raised their eyes, and behold, *every one of them looked like Archibald!* (The italics are my own.)

"And what puzzled me still more was the fact that the lad whom I had at first supposed to be my son did not resemble Archibald in every way. His nose was certainly not so much the Smythe nose as that which adorned the appealing face of the boy who sat third from the end. There were five sets of Smythe knock-knees in the crowd, and the Smythe strawberry-mark was under six left ears.

"Then the bitter, Yale-blue truth burst upon me and almost smote me to the earth—the Yale democratic spirit had gotten hold of my boy and hypnotized him into sharing his Smythe character, his Smythe traditions, even the features of his Smythe face, with the fellow-members of his class!

"Crushed by the contemplation of my son's fatal generosity, I turned away in despair. How would I know even my own son in a Freshman class where all the men were alike? True, he had only a limited number of eyes and ears and noses to give to his fellows, but the Smythe features were plain American enough to go a great way indeed.

"I broke the news gently to my poor wife when I reached our hotel, and together we journeyed sadly back to our native town. Immediately on arriving there I sent the following message to President Hadley:

"'Ship boy home at once.—SMYTHE.'

"In an hour the answer came:

"'Which one?—HADLEY.'

"I did not hesitate in replying:

"'Use your own discretion. There ain't much choice.—SMYTHE.'"

So closes the affidavit of W. John Smythe, a man whose personal friendship I have enjoyed for so many years that I can vouch for the inaccuracy of his statements, as I can for any other statements in these articles, I myself having gathered them from the most unreliable sources. Several trunk-loads of evidence I still have on hand sewed up for some Future Article when I shall bring twenty-three charges against the Faculty of Yale. Count them—23!

VAITI OF THE ISLANDS

(Concluded from Page 5)

the vigor of her language would have dispersed them.

The trawl-net and the tangle of manila were hanging over the stern, held up by a single rope. Vaiti glided to the rail, holding a sharp knife in her hand—("I always *did* think she kept one somewhere among her frillygigs," commented Harris silently, as he caught the flash of the steel)—and waited, still as a statue.

Presently out of the darkness shot a hail, accompanied by a perfect constellation of oaths. Its apparent object was to ascertain the Sybil's reason for steering such a course. The Sybil answered not a word, but steered the course some more.

The hail at the second time of repeating became a yell, with a strong note of terror in it. On came the Sybil, a dim, unlit tower of blackness, taking as much notice of the shouts as the Flying Dutchman. Those on board the Margaret Macintyre gave themselves up for lost. There was even a rush made for one of the boats. But the threatening shape swept past her bows, so near that the furious captain could have tossed a biscuit on board—so near that the Sybil's Kanaka crew, thinking that "papalangi" officers meant to ram the stranger, uttered war-cries wherein pure delight was mingled with overjoyed surprise.

It was all over in a minute, and the Sybil was well away on the Margaret Macintyre's port side before the latter vessel discovered, through the medium of a horrible jar from the engine-room and a powerful odor of oil, that the screw was badly fouled; leaving them, like St. Paul, with nothing to do but make the best of circumstances, and "wish that it were day."

A member of the trading firm that owned the Sybil was considerably surprised while walking down the wharf of Wellington, two days later, to see one of his company's schooners lying comfortably alongside, when her engagements demanded that she should have been in Papeete. It did not lessen his anger to run across the Sybil's captain on Lambton Quay a few minutes later, very finely dressed, and accompanied by his daughter, attired in a gown that evidently purported to be "Paris."

"May I ask what this means, Captain Saxon?" demanded the man of money-bags, with iced civility.

"It means that I'll buy the Sybil at your own price, and let you into a good thing, if you want one," answered his employee cheerfully. "Come along into the Occidental and we'll have a talk; but Vaiti must be in it; she's in everything, and I don't know what any of us would do without her."

A PICTORIAL REVENGE

THIS is the story of the painting that first brought Jacquet fame, then much advertising through a lawsuit, then money, and finally gave all Paris a laugh. Jacquet and his pink-and-white Pierrot heads are now known the length and breadth of the Fifth Avenue picture-shops, but time was when they had little fame and far less cash between them. Jacquet was a young man then, and had no American market to supply. But there came a time, as it always does with a man of his talent and originality, when he caught the public eye. A little water-color of his on exhibition made quite a stir, and one of its chief admirers was Alexandre Dumas, *fils*. A friend of M. Dumas went to Jacquet and told him how much his work was admired, intimating that M. Dumas would willingly buy if the price asked, twenty-five thousand francs, had not been set beyond his means. He could pay ten thousand, though, and the friend strongly advised Jacquet to let his water-color go for the lesser figure.

Jacquet readily agreed, and the little water-color was soon hanging in Dumas' house, between the two front windows of his drawing-room. One day, however, a friend asked Jacquet if he had heard the news: Dumas had sold his picture for seventy-five thousand francs. Jacquet ran the story down and found it true. Straightway he rushed to M. Dumas and indignantly demanded his original price. As a testimonial of his regard for the genius of a fellow-artist, he had been willing to forego his fixed price, but if Monsieur was to turn picture-dealer—— But Dumas for his part could not see it at all. Business was business.

Shortly after came the exhibition of the Society of the Aquarellists with a small but beautifully-painted picture by Jacquet called the Jew Pedler. It represented an Eastern scene in which a Jew was selling to a simple-looking young traveler some of his wares. The Jew was an excellent portrait of M. Dumas and the young man was Jacquet.

The story of the picture-sale had been going the rounds and everybody recognized the point of Jacquet's little joke. On a crowded day M. Dumas' son-in-law came in, posed before the picture, spoke contemptuously of it, and smashed frame, glass and picture with his heavy stick, scoring thereby a noble revenge!

But no coffee and pistols for two for Jacquet! Instead, the son-in-law was summoned to court to answer suit for seventy-five thousand francs. At the trial of the case, Jacquet was called to the witness-stand. His examination went on something like this: "M. Jacquet, have you ever sold an aquarelle for seventy-five thousand francs?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Do you really ever expect to?"

"I fear not."

"Then, Monsieur, how can you have the audacity to demand any such sum for this small picture?"

"That was the price, Monsieur."

"How can that be proved?"

"*It was so printed in the catalogue.*"

Sure enough! What everybody thought was a misprint for 750 fr. was intentionally 75,000 fr. Jacquet knew what to expect and had set his trap in advance. In the end Dumas had to pay.

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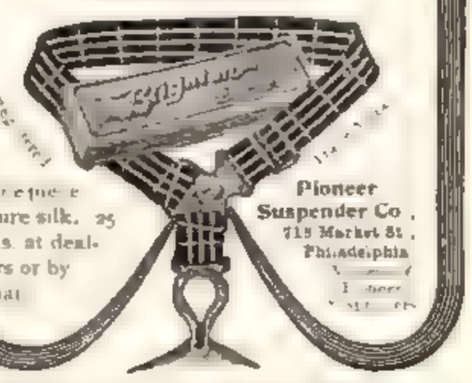

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GASPAR RUIZ

(Continued from Page 11)

"'*Bueno!* Stand away from me, men!'

"I pushed my way through the recoiling circle and heard once more that same oppressed voice saying earnestly:

"'Forget that I am a living man, Jorge. Forget me altogether and think of what you have to do.'

"'Be without fear, *señor*. You are nothing to me but a gun-carriage and I shall not waste a shot.'

"I heard the spluttering of a fort-fire and smelt the saltpetre of a match. I saw suddenly before me a nondescript shape on all fours like a beast, but with a man's head drooping below a tubular projection over the nape of the neck and the gleam of a rounded mass of bronze on its back.

"In front of a silent semicircle of men it squatted alone, with Jorge behind it and a trumpeter motionless, his trumpet in his hand, by its side.

"Jorge, bent double, muttered to it, port-fire in hand:

"'An inch to the left, *señor*. Too much —So—— Now, if you let yourself down a little by letting your elbows bend, I will . . . .'

"He leaped aside, lowering his port-fire, and a burst of flame leaped violently out of the muzzle of the gun lashed on the man's back.

"Then Gaspar Ruiz lowered himself slowly.

"'Good shot?' he asked.

"'Full on, *señor*.'

"'Then load again.'

"He lay there before me on his breast under the darkly glittering bronze of his monstrous burden, such as no love or strength of man had ever had to bear in the lamentable history of the world. His arms were spread out and he figured a black cross upon the moonlit ground.

"Again I saw him raised to his hands and knees, and the men stand away from him, and old Jorge stoop, glancing along the gun.

"'Left a little—right an inch—— For *Dios, señor*, stop this trembling. Where is your strength?'

"The old gunner's voice was cracked with emotion. Again he stepped aside and quick as lightning brought the spark to the touch-hole.

"'Excellent!' he cried tearfully, but Gaspar Ruiz lay for a long time silent, flattened on the ground in the shape of a cross.

"'I am tired,' he murmured at last. 'Will another shot do it?'

"'Without doubt,' said Jorge, bending down to his ear.

"'Then—load,' I heard him utter distinctly. 'Trumpeter!'

"'I am here, *señor*, ready for your word.'

"'Blow a blast at this word that would be heard from one end of Chile to the other, *hombre*,' he said in an extraordinarily strong voice. 'And, others, stand ready to cut this accursed *riata*, for then will be the time for me to lead you in your rush. Now raise me up, and you, Jorge—be quick with your aim.'

"The rattle of musketry from the fort nearly drowned his voice. The palisade was wreathed in smoke and flame.

"'Exert your force forward against the recoil this *amo*,' said the old gunner shakily. 'Dig your hands into the ground—So—Now!'

"A cry of exultation escaped him after the shot. The trumpeter raised his trumpet nearly to his lips and waited. But no word came from the prostrate man. I fell on my knees and heard all he had to say then.

"'Something broken,' he whispered, lifting his head and turning his eyes toward me in his hopelessly crushed attitude.

"'The gate hangs by no more than a splinter!' yelled Jorge.

"'Then trumpet . . . !' His voice died out in his throat, and I rose from my knees while they rolled the gun off his broken back. He was insensible.

"I kept my lips shut, of course, and the signal for attack was never given. Instead, the bugle-calls of the relieving force, for which my ears had thirsted so long, burst out terrifying like the call of the Last Day to our surprised enemies.

"A tornado, *señores*, a real hurricane of stampeded men, wild horses, mounted Indians, swept over me as I cowered on the ground by the side of Gaspar Ruiz, still stretched out in the shape of a cross. Peneleo, galloping for life, made a jab at me with his long *chuzo* in passing—for luck, I suppose. How I escaped the flying lead is more difficult to explain. Venturing to rise on my knees too soon, some soldiers of the Seventeenth Taltal regiment, my own regiment, in their hurry to get at something alive, nearly bayoneted me on the spot, and looked very disappointed, too, when some officers, galloping up, drove them away with the flat of their swords.

"It was General Robles with his staff. He wanted badly some prisoners. He, too, seemed disappointed for a moment.

"'What, is it you?' he cried.

"But he dismounted at once to embrace me, for he was an old friend of my family. I pointed to the body at my feet and said only these two words:

"'Gaspar Ruiz.'

"He threw his arms up with astonishment.

"'Aha! Your strong man! Always to the last with your strong man! No matter. He saved our lives when the earth trembled enough to make the bravest faint with fear. I was frightened out of my wits. But he—no! *Que guapo!* Where's the hero who got the best of him, ha! ha! ha! What killed him, *chico?*'

"'His own strength, General,' I answered.

"But he breathed yet. I had him carried in his poncho under the shelter of some bushes on the very ridge from which he had been gazing so fixedly at the fort while unseen death was hovering already over his head.

"Our troops had bivouacked round the fort. Toward daybreak I was not surprised to hear that I was designated to command the escort of a prisoner that was to be sent down at once to Santiago. Of course, the prisoner was Gaspar Ruiz' wife.

"'I have named you out of kindness for her,' General Robles remarked, 'though the woman really ought to be shot.'

"And as I made a movement of shocked protest, he continued:

"'Now he is as well as dead, she is of no importance. Nobody will know what to do with her. However, the Government wants her.' He shrugged his shoulders. 'I suppose he must have buried large quantities of his loot in places that she alone knows of.'

"At dawn I saw her come up the ridge guarded by two soldiers and carrying her child on her arm.

"I walked to meet her.

"'Is he living yet?' she asked, turning to me that white, impassive face he used to look at in an adoring way.

"I bent my head and led her round a clump of bushes without a word. His eyes were open. He breathed with difficulty and spoke with a great effort:

"'Erminia!'

"She knelt at his head. The little girl, unconscious of him and with her big eyes looking about, began to chatter suddenly in a joyous, thin voice. She pointed a tiny finger at the rosy glow of sunrise behind the black shapes of the peaks. And while that child-talk, incomprehensible and sweet to the ear, lasted, those two, the man stretched on his back and the kneeling woman, remained silent, looking in each other's eyes, listening to the frail sound. Then the prattle stopped. The child laid its head against its mother's breast and was still.

"'It was you,' he began. 'Forgive!' His voice failed him. Presently I heard him mutter and caught the words: 'Not strong enough!'

"She looked at him with an extraordinary intensity. He tried to smile, and in a humble voice:

"'Forgive!' he repeated. 'Leaving you ——'

"She bent down. 'I cannot! I cannot!' she sobbed, dry-eyed. 'On all the earth I have loved nothing but you, Gaspar!'

"His head made a movement. His eyes sparkled.

"'At last!' he sighed out—then anxiously: 'But is it true? . . . is it *true?*'

"'As true as that there is no mercy and justice in this world!' she answered him passionately. She stooped over his face; he tried to raise his head, but it fell back, and when she kissed his lips he was already dead. His eyes stared wide at the sky on which pink clouds floated very high. But I noticed the eyelids of the child pressed to its mother's breast droop and close slowly. She had gone to sleep.

"The widow of Gaspar Ruiz, the strong man, let me lead her away without a word.

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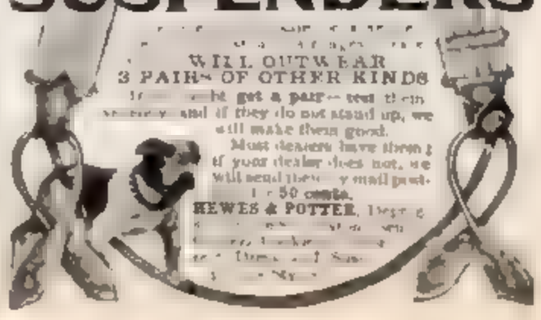

"For traveling we had arranged for her a side-saddle very much like a chair with a board swung beneath to rest her feet on. And the first day she rode without uttering a word, and hardly for one moment turning her eyes away from the little girl whom she nursed on her knees all the time. At our first camp I saw her during the night walking about, rocking the child in her arms and gazing down at it by the light of the moon. After we had started on our second day's march she asked me how soon we could come to the first village of the inhabited country.

"I said we would be there about noon.

"'And will there be women there?' she inquired.

"I told her that it was a large village. 'There shall be men and women there, *señora*,' I said, 'whose hearts shall be made glad by the news that all the unrest and war is over now.'

"'Yes, it is all over now,' she repeated. Then after a time: '*Señor officer*, what will your Government do with me?'

"'I do not know, *señora*,' I said. 'They shall treat you well, no doubt. We Republicans are not savages, and take no vengeance on women.'

"She gave me a look at the word Republican which I imagined full of undying hate. But an hour or so afterward, as we drew up to let the baggage-mules go first through a narrow path, she looked at me with such a sad, troubled face that I felt a great pity for her.

"'*Señor officer*,' she said, 'I am weak. I tremble. It is an insensate fear.' And, indeed, her lips did tremble while she tried to smile at her own terror of the narrow pass which was not so dangerous, after all. 'I am afraid I shall drop the child. Gaspar has saved your life, you remember, once. . . . . Take her. . . . .'

"I took the child out of her extended

"'Shut your eyes, *señora*, and trust your mule,' I recommended.

"She did so, and with her pallor and her wasted, thin face she looked deathlike. I held the little girl on my left arm. At a turn of the path where a great crag of purple porphyry closes the view of the lowlands I saw her open her eyes. I rode just behind.

"'The child is all right!' I cried encouragingly.

"'Yes,' she answered faintly—and then, to my intense terror, I saw her stand up on the foot-rest, staring horribly, and throw herself forward into the chasm on our right.

"I cannot describe to you the horrid and abject dread that came over me at that dreadful sight. It was a dread of the abyss, the dread of the crags which seemed to nod upon me. My head swam. I pressed the child to my side and sat my horse as still as a statue. I was mute and cold all over. The mule staggered, sidling close to the rock, and then went on. My horse pricked up his ears with a slight snort and at this my heart stopped with fear. And from the depths of the precipice the stones, rattling in the bed of the furious stream, made me almost insane with their sound.

"Next moment we were round the turn and on the broad back of a grassy slope. And then I yelled. Men came running back to me in great alarm. It seems that at first I did nothing but shout: 'She has given me the child! She has given me the child!' They thought I had gone mad."

General Santierra ceased and rose from the table. "And that is all, *señores*," he concluded with a courteous glance at his tumultuously rising guests.

"But what became of the child, General?"

"Ah, the child, the child! Wait."

He walked to one of the windows opening on his beautiful garden, the refuge of his old days, whose fame was great in the land. Keeping us back with a raised arm he called out:

"Erminia, Erminia! Oh, daughter!"

He waited. Then his cautioning arm dropped and we crowded to the windows.

From a clump of trees a woman had come upon the broad walk bordered with flowers. We could hear the rustle of her starched petticoats and observe the vast spread of her old-fashioned black silk skirt. She looked up and saw all these eyes staring at her, stopped, frowned, smiled, shook her finger at the general, who was laughing boisterously, and drawing a black lace shawl she had on her head so as to conceal her face, passed out of our sight walking with stiff dignity.

"You have beheld the guardian angel of the old man—and her to whom you owe all that is seemly and comfortable in my hospitality. Somehow, *señores*, though the flame of love had been kindled early in my breast I have never married. And perhaps it is because of that that the sparks of the sacred fire are not yet extinct here."

He struck his broad chest.

"'Still alive, still alive!'" he said with a serio-comic emphasis. "But I shall not marry now. She is General Santierra's daughter and heiress."

One of our fellow-guests, a young naval officer, described her afterward as a "short, squat, old girl of forty or thereabouts." But we all noticed that her hair was turning gray and that she had very fine black eyes.

And General Santierra continued:

"Neither will she marry for anything. A real calamity! Good, patient, devoted to the old man. A simple soul. But I would not advise any of you to ask for her hand, for if she took yours into hers it would be only to crush your bones. Ah, she does not jest on that subject! And she is the own daughter of her father, the strong man who perished through his own strength of his muscle, of his simplicity—of his love!"

(THE END)

BUILDING UP A RETAIL BUSINESS

(Concluded from Page 12)

sales is not always a true criterion of his salesmanship. In other words, some clerks get into the habit of increasing the volume of their sales at the expense of the proprietor's profits.

The practice of cutting prices is quite as much a matter of personal disposition as it is of necessity. Without realizing it, clerks who have a weakness in this direction fall into the way of shaving a little off from the price whenever there seems to be the slightest possible excuse for so doing. Others adopt this practice deliberately and for the purpose of making the total of their sales look attractive in the eyes of the storekeeper, thus paying him the poor compliment of believing that he is not shrewd and discerning enough to detect their trick. Of course the store's regular books of entry are written up from the stubs of these small books, and if a number is missing in any one of them it is a legitimate reason for inquiry. Not fifty per cent. of the country merchants use these books, which would, in my opinion, probably cut down three-fourths of "lost charges."

Economy of time is another matter altogether too slightly considered by the average storekeeper. There is always something to do about a country store, and the successful merchant is one who is best able to employ to advantage the time of his clerks when they are not occupied by waiting on customers. It is not sufficient, however, to keep the clerks occupied to advantage during all their work hours, but the matter of economy in time should extend beyond this, and be applied to a suitable arrangement of conveniences. The merchant who has his stock so arranged as to handle it to the best possible advantage can make a saving of anywhere from fifteen to twenty-five per cent. of actual labor in the dealing out of goods. It is not to be expected that the country store can be designed upon a model plan, as can the big city merchandizing establishment; but it is true that the number of country stores in which the maximum of possible convenience has been obtained through an intelligent arrangement of merchandise is few.

So far as the advertising to be done by the country merchant is concerned, little need be said beyond the simple statement that he should always bear in mind that trait of human nature which will cause a customer to go to unusual pains and inconvenience in order to get the benefit of a bargain. He may depend upon it that if he advertises some staple article at a figure which the public knows must be very close to cost, or below it, he will draw special custom to his store—and that when these customers are once within his doors they will naturally buy other goods not advertised or sold at a sacrifice price. This, it seems to me, is the whole story of success in advertising, so far as it concerns the country storekeeper. The thrifty farmer will drive five miles over muddy roads to get a barrel of salt on which he knows he is saving ten cents, while at the same time he will buy other goods which the thrifty merchant sells him at a good margin of profit. This is simply human nature; it has always been thus since country stores began and will continue to be so as long as they are run.

Before dismissing the subject of selling goods it should be said that the storekeeper must always keep in mind the principle of not allowing his *customers to make his prices*. The world is full of shrewd buyers, and every town has its proportion of them. These sharp traders have learned that if they can get the prices on the merchant's goods they will get the best end of the bargain. When a customer comes into a store and informs the merchant that his competitor is selling sugar for two cents less than the price which has just been named to him, the storekeeper should at once settle it with himself that he is establishing a dangerous precedent, and playing into the hands of the customer, if this reported cut in price is met without careful investigation. And even then he should generally stand firm and refuse to meet this competitive attack. *The man who sells the right goods in the right way has no need to do business at a loss* on any article or to allow his competitor or his customers to make his prices.

There are two classes of country storekeepers who keep up the large percentage of failures in this line of business. These are the merchants who are not contented with small beginnings, but insist in starting out with a splurge and a show involving an investment and expenditure beyond that which the business will warrant, and those who, on the other hand, are content to drift like logs down the stream, and feel that they are doing a fairly good business if they are able to make sixty dollars a month with nothing charged for carrying their investment.

There are thousands of small storekeepers who are satisfied to make the wages of a day laborer and who have little ambition beyond this. Of course, this means that the margin between the profit and loss of their total business is so small that a little carelessness or a little misfortune turns their balance against them, when their capital is so small and their resources are so limited that they are unable to stand their reverse, even in a temporary way, and are, therefore, closed up by their creditors. This should emphasize the fact that no matter how small may be the business of the storekeeper, it is absolutely essential to his existence to figure his cost so that no item or element will be left out; to see that all of his running expenses or fixed charges are included in his cost; that no goods are permitted to pass over his counter without being paid for or charged; that he practices thorough economy, and does so in a consistent and systematic way, which applies both to his handling of goods and to his use of the services of his employees; that he keeps his store in a clean and attractive manner, and that he does not allow his customers or his competitors to lead him into making prices which do not yield him a fair and substantial profit.

By thus stopping all the little leaks on the one hand and by a consistent and energetic expansion of profitable business on the other the country storekeeper may amass a very comfortable competency in almost any locality which enjoys a reasonable degree of prosperity. Depend upon it, every community will have its prosperous storekeeper, and he will succeed because he conducts his business upon the principles which have been indicated.

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THE FIGHTING CHANCE

(Continued from Page 15)

they only turned around sulkily in the corners of the cage and evinced a desire to lie down."

"What a mischief-maker you are," said Sylvia listlessly; and though Grace became very vivacious in describing her plans to extract amusement out of Plank's hoped-for presence, Sylvia remained uninterested.

There seemed, in fact, little to interest her that summer at Shotover House; and, though she never refused any plans made for her, and her attitude was one of quiet acquiescence always, she never expressed a preference for anything, a desire to do anything; and, if let alone, was prone to pace the cliffs or stretch her slim, rounded body on the sand of some little, sheltered, crescent beach, apparently content with the thunderous calm of sea and sky.

Her interest, too, in people had seemingly been extinguished. Once or twice she did inquire as to Marion's whereabouts, and learned that Miss Page was fishing in Minnesota somewhere but would return to Shotover when the shooting opened. Somebody, Captain Voucher, perhaps, mentioned to somebody in her hearing that Siward was still in New York. If she heard she made no sign, no inquiry. The next morning she remained abed with a headache, and Grace motored to Wendover without her; but Sylvia spent the rest of the day on the cliffs, and played Bridge with the devil's own luck till dawn, piling up a score that staggered Mr. Fleetwood, who had been instructing her in adversary play a day or two before.

The hot month dragged on; Quarrier came; Agatha Caithness arrived a few days later—scheme of the Ferralls involving Alderdene!—but the Siwanoa did not come, and Plank remained invisible. Leila Mortimer arrived from Swan's Harbor toward the middle of the month, offering no information as to the whereabouts of what Major Belwether delicately designated as her "legitimate." But everybody knew he was at last to be crossed off and struck clean out, and the ugly history of the winter, now so impudently corroborated at Saratoga, gave many a hostess the opportunity long desired. Mortimer, as far as his own particular circle was concerned, was down and out; Leila, accepted as a matter of course without him, remained quietly uncommunicative. If the outward physical change in her was due to her marital rupture, people thought it was well that it had come in time, for she bloomed like a lovely exotic; and her silences and enthusiasms, and the fragrant freshness of her developing attitude toward the world, first disconcerted, then amused, then touched those who had supposed themselves to be so long a buckler for her foibles and a shield for her caprice.

As for Plank, he was too busy to know what the thermometer was about; he had no time for anything outside of his own particular business except to go every day to the big, darkened house in lower Fifth Avenue, where the days had been hard on Siward and the nights harder.

Siward, however, could walk now, using his crutches still, but often stopping gently to test his left foot and see how much weight he was able to bear on it—even taking a tentative step or two without crutch support. He drove when he thought it prudent to use the horses in the heat, usually very early in the morning, though sometimes at night with Plank, when the latter had time to run his touring car through the park and out into the Bronx or Westchester for a breath of air.

But Plank wanted him to go away, get out of the city for his convalescence, and Siward flatly declined, demanding that Plank permit him to do his share in the fight against the Inter-County people.

And Plank, utterly unable to persuade him, and the more hampered because of his anxiety about Siward—though that young man did not know it—wore himself out providing Siward with such employment in the matter as would lightly occupy him without doing any good to the enemy.

So Siward, stripped to his pajamas, pored over reams of typewritten matter and took his brief walking exercise in the comparative cool of the evening and drove when he dared use his horses; or, sitting beside Plank, whizzed northward through the starry darkness of the suburbs.

Then, one sultry day toward the last week in August, a certain judge of a certain court, known among some as "Harrington's judge," sent secretly for Plank. And Plank knew that the crisis was over. But neither Harrington nor Quarrier dreamed of such a thing.

Fear sat heavy on that judge's soul—the godless, selfish fear that sends the first coward slinking from the councils of conspiracy to seek immunity from those slowly grinding millstones that grind exceeding fine.

Quarrier at Shotover, with his private car and his locomotive within an hour's drive, strolled with Sylvia on the eve of her departure for Lenox with Leila Mortimer; then, when their conference was ended, he returned to Agatha, calmly unconscious of impending events.

Harrington, at Seabright, paced his veranda, awaiting this same judge, annoyed as two boats came in without the expected guest. And never for one instant did he dream that his creature sat closeted with Plank, tremulous, sallow, nearing the edge of cringing avowal—only held back from utter collapse by the agonizing necessity of completing a bargain that might save himself from the degradation of the punishment that had seemed inevitable. All day long he sat with Plank. Nobody except those two knew he was there. And after a very long time Plank consented that nobody else except Siward and Harrington and Quarrier should ever know. So he called up Harrington on the telephone, saying that there was, in the office, somebody who desired to speak to him. And when Harrington caught the judge's first faint, stammered word he reeled where he stood, ashen, unbelieving, speechless. The shaking but remorseless voice went on, dinning horribly in his ear, then ceased, and Plank's heavy voice sounded the curt *coup de grâce*.

Harrington was an old man, a very old man, mortally hurt; but he steadied himself along the wall of his study to the desk and sank into the chair.

After a little while he passed a thin hand over his eyes, over his gray head, over the mouth that all men watched with fear, over the shaven jaw now grimly set but trembling. His hand, too, shook with palsy as he wrote, painfully picking out the words and figures of the cipher from his code-book; but he closed his thin lips and squared his unsteady jaw and wrote his message to Quarrier:

> It's all up. Plank will take over Inter-County. Come at once.

Plank slept the sleep of utter exhaustion that night; the morning found him haggard but strong, cool in his triumph, serious, stern-faced, almost sad that his work was done, the battle won.

From his own house he telegraphed a curt summons to Harrington and to Quarrier for a conference in his own office; then, finishing whatever business his morning mail required, put on his hat and went to see the one man in the world he was most glad for.

He found him at breakfast, sipping coffee and wrinkling his brows over the eternal typewritten pages. And Plank's face cleared at the sight and he sat down, laughing aloud.

"It's all over, Siward," he said. "Harrington knows it; Quarrier knows it by this time. Their judge crawled in yesterday and threw himself on our mercy; and the men whose whip he obeyed will be on their way to surrender by this time. . . . Well! Haven't you a word?"

"Many," said Siward slowly; "too many to utter, but not enough to express what I feel. If you will take two on account, here they are in one phrase: thank you."

"Debt's canceled," said Plank, laughing. "Do you want to hear the details?"

The narrative exchanged by Plank in return for Siward's intensely interested questions was a simple, limpid review of a short but terrific campaign that only yesterday had threatened to rage through court after court, year after year. In the sudden shock of the cessation from battle Plank himself was a little dazed. Yet he himself had expected the treason that ended all; he himself had foreseen it. He had counted on it as a good general counts on such things, confidently, but with a dozen plans as substitutes in case that plan failed—each plan as elaborately worked out to the last detail as though it

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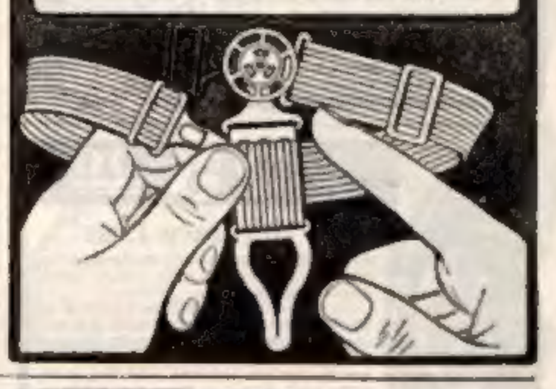

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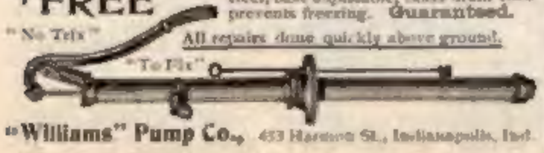

"Williams" Pump Co., 433 Harmon St., Indianapolis, Ind.

alone existed as the only hope of victory. But if Siward suspected something of this it was not from Plank that he learned it.

"Plank," he said at last, "there is nothing in the world that men admire more than a man. It is a good deal of a privilege for me to tell you so."

Plank turned red with surprise and embarrassment, stammering out something incoherent.

That was all that was said about the victory. Siward, unusually gay for a while, presently turned sombre; and it was Plank's turn to lift him out of it by careless remarks about his rapid convalescence, and the chance for vacation he so much needed.

Once Siward looked up vacantly: "Where am I to go?" he asked. "I'd as soon stay here."

"But I'm going," insisted Plank. "The Fells is all ready for us."

"The Fells! I can't go *there!*"

"W-what?" faltered Plank, looking at Siward with hurt eyes.

"Can't you—don't you understand?" said Siward in a low voice.

"No. You once promised——"

"Plank, I'll go anywhere except there with you. I'd rather be with you than with anybody. Can I say more than that?"

"I think you ought to, Siward. A—a fellow feels the refusal of his offered rooftree."

"Man! man! It isn't your roof I am refusing. I want to go; I'd give anything to go. If it were anywhere except where it is, I'd go fast enough. Now do you understand? If—if Shotover House and Shotover people were not next door to the Fells, I'd go *Now* do you understand?"

Plank said: "I don't know whether I understand. If you mean Quarrier, he's on his way here, and he'll have business to keep him here for the next few months, I assure you. But"—he looked very gravely across at Siward—"if you don't mean Quarrier——" He hesitated, ill at ease under the expressionless scrutiny of the other.

"*Do* you know what's the matter with me, Plank?" he asked at length.

"I think so."

"I have wondered. I wonder now how much you know."

"Very little, Siward."

"*How* much?"

Plank looked up, hesitated, and shook his head: "One infers from what one hears."

"Infers what?"

"The truth, I suppose," replied Plank simply.

"And what," insisted Siward, "have you inferred that you believe to be the truth? Don't parry, Plank; it isn't easy for me, and I—I never before spoke this way to any man. . . . It is likely I should have spoken to my mother about it. . . . I had expected to. It may be weakness—I don't know; but I'd like to talk a little about it to somebody. And there's nobody fit to listen, except you."

"If you feel that way," said Plank slowly, "I will be very glad to listen."

"I feel that way. I've been through—some things; I've been pretty sick, Plank. It tires a man out; a man's head and shoulders get tired. Oh, I don't mean the usual reaction from self-contempt, disgust—the dreadful, aching sadness of it all which lasts even while desire, stunned for the moment, wakens into craving. I don't mean that. It is something else—a deathly, mental solitude that terrifies. I tell you, no man except a man smitten by my malady knows what solitude can be! . . . There! I didn't mean to be theatrical; I had no intention of——"

"Go on," cut in Plank heavily.

"Go on! . . . Yes, I want to. You know what a pillow is to a tired man's shoulder. I want to use your sane intelligence to rest on a moment. It's my brain that's tired, Plank."

Siward rested his head on one clenched hand. "How much chance do *you* think I have?" he asked wearily.

Plank considered for a moment, then: "You are not trying, Siward."

"I have been trying since—since March."

Plank looked at him curiously. "What happened in March?"

Siward, cheek crushed against his fist, his elbow on the desk, gazed at him steadily.

"In March," he said, "Miss Landis spoke to me. I've made a better fight since."

Plank's serious face darkened. "Is she the only anchor you have?"

"Plank, I am not even sure of her. I have made a better fight since then; that is all I dare say. . . . I know what men think about a man like me; I know they demand character, pride, self-denial. But, Plank, I am driving faster and faster toward the breakers, and these anchors are dragging. For it is not, in my case, the physical failure to obey the will; it is the will itself that has been attacked from the first. *That* is the horror of it. And what is there behind the will-power to strengthen it? Only the source of will-power—the mind. It is the mind that cannot help me. What am I to do?"

"There is a spiritual strength," said Plank timidly.

"I have never dreamed of denying it," said Siward. "I have tried to find it through the accepted sources—accepted by me, too. God has not helped me in the conventional way or through traditional methods; but that has not inclined me to doubt Him as the tribunal of last resort," he added hastily. "I don't for a moment waver in faith because I am ignorant of the proper manner to approach Him. The Arbiter of all knows that I desire to be decent. He must be aware, too, that all anchors save one have failed to hold me."

He looked up at Plank, curiously embarrassed.

"Your body is normal; your intelligence wholesome, balanced, sane; and I want to ask you if you think that perhaps, without understanding how, I have found in her, or through her, in some way, the spiritual source that I think might help me to help myself?"

And, as Plank made no reply:

"Or am I talking sentimental cant? Don't answer, if you think that. I can't trust my own mind any more, anyway; and," with an ugly laugh, "I'll know it all some day—the sooner the better!"

"Don't say that!" growled Plank. "You were sane a moment ago."

Siward looked up sharply, but the other silenced him with a gesture.

"Wait! You asked me a perfectly sane question—so wholesome, so normal, that I'm trying to frame an answer worthy of it! I intimated that after the physical, the mental, the ethical phenomena, there remained always the spiritual instinct. Like a wireless current, if a man can establish communication it is well for him, whatever the method. You assented, I think."

"Yes."

"And you ask me if I believe it possible that she can be the medium?"

"Yes."

Plank said deliberately: "Yes, I do."

The silence was again broken by Plank: "Siward, you have asked me what I think. Now you must listen to the end. If you believed that through her—her love, marrying her—you stood the best chance in the world to win out, it would be cowardly to ask her to take the risk. As much as I care for you I had rather see you lose the fight than accept such a risk from her. Now you know what I think—but you don't know all. Siward, I say to you that if you are man enough to take her, take her! And I say that of the two risks she is running to-day, the chance she might take with you is infinitely the lesser risk. For with you, if you continue slowly losing your fight, the mental suffering only will be hers. But if she closes this bargain with Quarrier the light will go out of her soul for ever."

He leaned heavily toward Siward, stretching out his powerful arm.

"You marry her; and keep open your spiritual communication through her, if that is the way it has been established, and hang on to your God, that way until your body is dead! I tell you, Siward, to marry her. I don't care how you do it; I don't care how you get her. Take her! Yours, of the two, is the stronger character, or she would not be where she is. Does she want what you cannot give her? Cure that desire—it is more contemptible than the craving that shatters you! I say, let the one-eyed lead the blind. Miracles are worked out by mathematics—if you have faith enough."

He rose, holding out his broad hand.

"Good-by," he said. "Harrington is about due at my office; Quarrier will probably turn up to-night. I am not vindictive; I shall be just with them—as just as I know how, which is to be as merciful as I dare be. Good-by. I—I believe you and she are going to get well."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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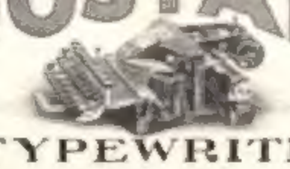

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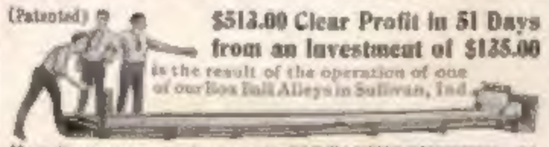

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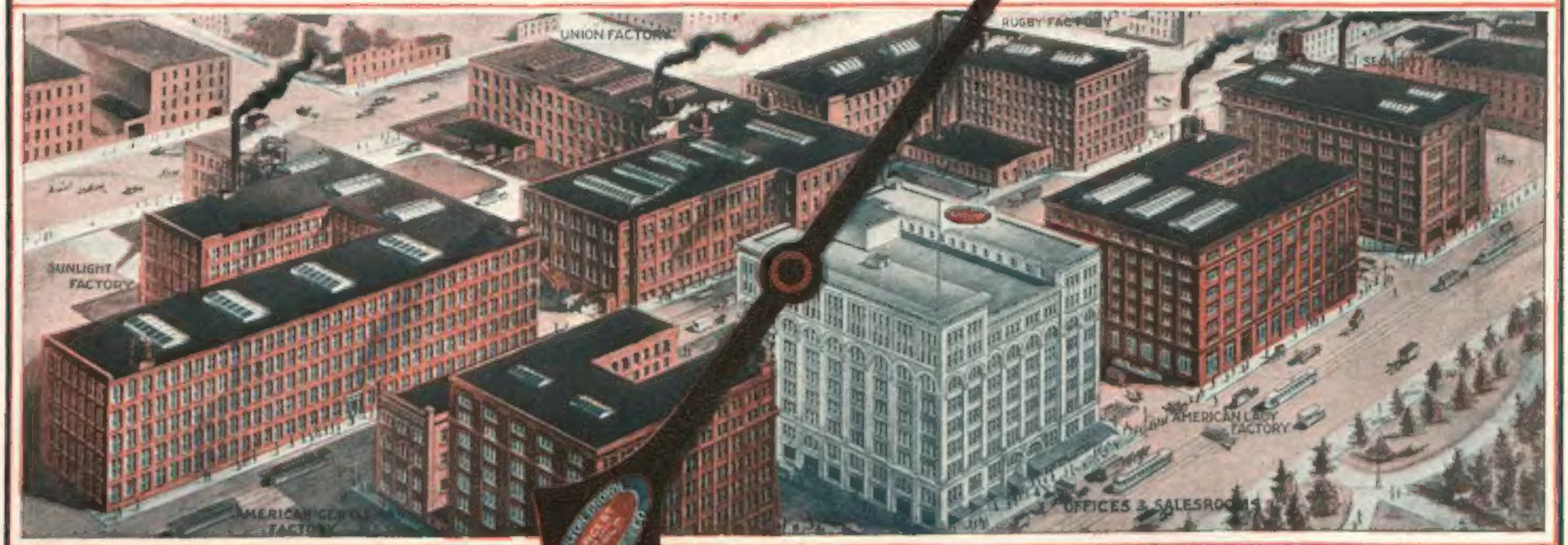

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